



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

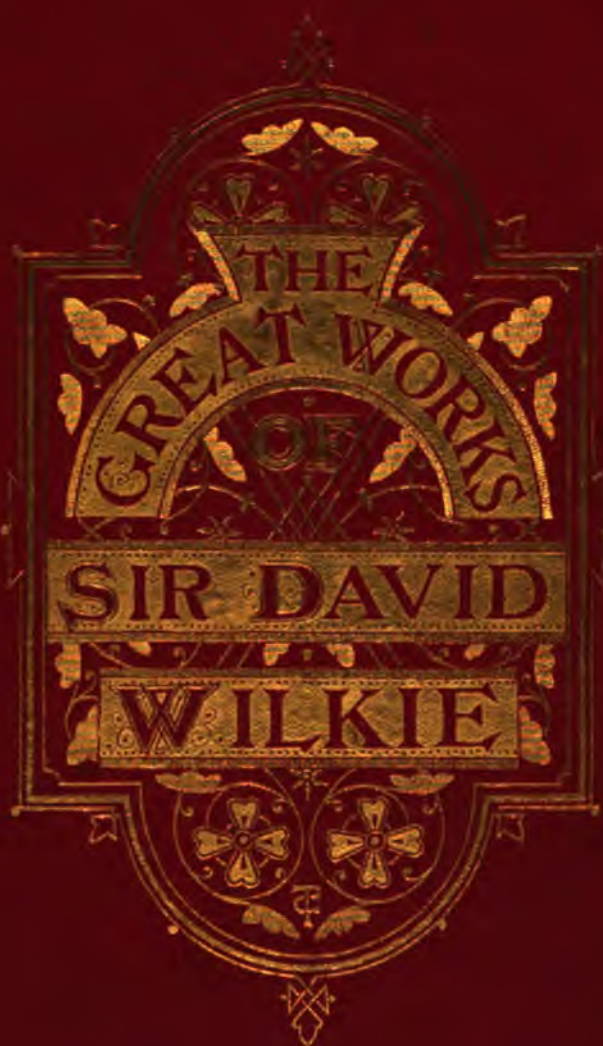
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





600027990X







THE GREAT WORKS OF WILKIE.







THE
GREAT WORKS OF
SIR DAVID WILKIE.

TWENTY-SIX PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE CELEBRATED
ENGRAVINGS OF HIS MOST IMPORTANT
PAINTINGS.

WITH A DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNT OF THE PICTURES AND
A MEMOIR OF THE ARTIST
BY MRS. CHARLES HEATON.




LONDON :
BELL AND DALDY, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.
CAMBRIDGE: DEIGHTON, BELL, AND CO.

1868.

210. h. 83.

CHISWICK PRESS:—PRINTED BY WHITTINGHAM AND WILKINS,
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE.

DUNCAN GRAY.

UNCAN GRAY cam here to woo,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't;
On blythe yule night when we were fou,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.
Maggie coost her head fu' high,
Look'd asklent and unco skeigh,
Gart poor Duncan stand abeigh,
Ha, ha, the wooing o't.

It is not improbable that Wilkie had also in his mind the lines from the beautiful ballad of "Auld Robin Gray:"—

My father urged me sair,
My mither did na speak,
But she looked in my face,
Till my heart was nigh to break.

The anxious entreating look of the old woman is very finely rendered. Mulready sat for Duncan Gray in this picture, and Maggie is said to be a portrait of Wilkie's sister.

"Duncan Gray" was painted for Dr. Baillie, but he subsequently exchanged it with Wilkie for "The Pedlar," and Lord Charles Townshend became its purchaser. It was exhibited in 1814 under the name of "The Refusal," and is now in the South Kensington Museum.



PREFACE.

MORE than sixty years have now passed since David Wilkie came to London, exhibited his “Blind Fiddler,” and fully established the fame which had just begun to dawn upon him. From that day to this his popularity has never waned.

The well-known prints by Raimbach, Burnet, Engleheart, and other excellent engravers, have made his pictures as familiar to us as household words, and for centuries to come, wherever Englishmen and Scotchmen congregate, the name of Wilkie will be held in reverence.

The editor of the present little volume esteems as an honour the privilege of assisting to perpetuate the fame of so great an artist, by placing his best works before the public in a new and more easily accessible form; and thanks are especially due to Mr. Henry Graves for his kind co-operation, without which several of Sir David's last works could not have been here represented.



LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS.

ARRANGED ACCORDING TO THE DATES OF THE PICTURES.



- T**HE VILLAGE RECRUIT. From the engraving by CHARLES FOX.
2. THE VILLAGE POLITICIANS. The picture in the possession of the Earl of Mansfield. From the engraving by ABRAHAM RAIMBACH.
3. THE BLIND FIDDLER. The picture in the National Gallery. From the engraving by JOHN BURNET
4. ALFRED IN THE NEATHERD'S COTTAGE. The picture painted for Mr. A. Davison. From the engraving by JAMES MITCHELL.
5. THE RENT DAY. The picture painted for the Earl of Mulgrave. From the engraving by ABRAHAM RAIMBACH.
6. THE CARD PLAYERS. The picture painted for H. R. H. the Duke of Gloucester. From the engraving by C. LEWIS.
7. THE SICK LADY. The picture in the possession of Sir F. G. Moon, Bart. From the engraving by F. ENGLEHEART.
8. THE CUT FINGER. The picture in the possession of Mr. S. Whitbread. From the engraving by ABRAHAM RAIMBACH.
9. THE VILLAGE FESTIVAL. The picture in the National Gallery. From the engraving by W. FINDEN.
10. BLIND MAN'S BUFF. The picture in the possession of Her Majesty. From the engraving by ABRAHAM RAIMBACH.
11. DUNCAN GRAY. The picture in the Sheepshanks' Collection. From the engraving by F. ENGLEHEART. *Frontispiece.*
12. THE PEDLAR. The picture painted for Dr. M. Baillie. From the engraving by JAMES STEWART.
13. DISTRAINING FOR RENT. The picture painted for the British Institution. From the engraving by ABRAHAM RAIMBACH.
14. THE RABBIT ON THE WALL. The picture painted for Mr. John Turner. From the engraving by JOHN BURNET.

15. SIR WALTER SCOTT AND HIS FAMILY. The picture in the possession of Sir A. Fergusson. From the engraving by R. GRAVES, A.R.A.
16. THE PENNY WEDDING. The picture in the possession of Her Majesty. From the engraving by JAMES STEWART.
17. READING THE WILL. The picture in the possession of the King of Bavaria. From the engraving by JOHN BURNET
18. CHELSEA PENSIONERS READING THE GAZETTE OF THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO. The picture in the possession of the Duke of Wellington. From the engraving by JOHN BURNET.
19. THE PARISH BEADLE. The picture in the National Gallery. From the engraving by ABRAHAM RAIMBACH.
20. THE HIGHLAND FAMILY. The picture in the possession of the Earl of Essex. From the engraving by W. FINDEN.
21. THE MAID OF SARAGOSSA. The picture in the possession of Her Majesty. From the engraving by S. COUSINS, R.A.
22. JOHN KNOX PREACHING. The picture in the possession of Sir Robert Peel. From the engraving by T. DOO, R.A.
23. THE SPANISH MOTHER AND CHILD. The picture painted for Sir W. Knighton, Bart. From the engraving by ABRAHAM RAIMBACH.
24. THE FIRST EAR-RING. The picture in the Vernon Gallery. From the engraving by F. ENGLEHEART.
25. COLUMBUS AT THE CONVENT OF LA RIBIDA. The picture in the possession of Mr. R. S. Holford, M.P. From the engraving by RYALL.
26. THE VILLAGE SCHOOL. The picture in the possession of Sir F. G. Moon, Bart. From the engraving by JOHN BURNET.

The Photographs by Messrs. Cundall and Fleming.





MEMOIR OF SIR DAVID WILKIE.

“ For, don’t you mark, we’re made so that we love
First when we see them painted, things we have passed
Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see ;
And so they are better, painted—better to us,
Which is the same thing. Art was given for that—
God uses us to help each other so,
Lending our minds out.”

ROBERT BROWNING.



77 THE canons of artistic criticism are unfortunately as yet too uncertain to permit us, in estimating the worth and scope of an artist's work, to dispense with any aid we may be able to derive from an acquaintance with the outer circumstances of his life, and the individual peculiarities of his character; for although on the one hand, the study of his work will nearly always reveal to us something of the personal nature of the artist, yet on the other, a knowledge of his life will often give us a clearer insight than we could otherwise attain into the real meaning of his teaching, and may perhaps lead us to feel a deeper sympathy with its truth. This is peculiarly the case with the life and work of David Wilkie. His pictures indeed tell us much of the mind of the painter, but the upright and simple life of the man leads us also to a better understanding of his art.

The family of Wilkie, as its illustrious descendant tells us, in an unfinished autobiography, was an old one in Mid-Lothian, and had held the small estate of Ratho-Byres for four hundred years. By the imprudence of some members of the family, this property, however, passed to a younger branch, and John Wilkie, Sir David's grandfather, held it only as its tenant and cultivator.

Allan Cunningham, in his admirable "Life of Sir David Wilkie," tells us that "the birthplace of his fathers was dear to Wilkie's heart," and that when his fame increased he used sometimes to indulge in the dream of "buying back, if possible, the family inheritance, some fifty or sixty acres; of building a mansion where the grey old gable of Ratho-Byres stood; and of adorning it with pictures from his own pencil, recording scenes of Scottish glory." This desire was never fulfilled, but it shows us that Sir David had the true Scottish love of pedigree, and regarded his ancestors' history as his own inalienable inheritance. We find him, in the same unaccomplished memoir before alluded to, regretting that he cannot "count kindred" with a certain Rev. John Wilkie of Uphall, who, when requested by the Presbytery to preach a sermon against "the heinousness of witchcraft," preached one instead against the heinousness and folly of believing in it—and this in 1720. Brave old Puritan, who dared, in spite of his Calvinism, to evince a rational understanding! No wonder Sir David wished to "count kindred" with such a man.

The Rev. David Wilkie, Sir David's father, was born at Ratho-Byres in 1738. He was brought up for the church, but not until he had reached his thirty-second year did he obtain preferment. Even then it was only to the post of assistant-minister with a salary of sixteen pounds per annum. In 1773 he received a presentation to the church of Cults, whose "stipend, paid partly in kind and partly in money, amounted in 1774 to the moderate sum of £68 10s. 3d.," and for many years afterwards it fluctuated from £57 up to £100. On this modest income, however, the good frugal minister ventured

to marry, and obtained for his wife "one of the most beautiful women in Fife," as he tells us in his simple diary, which, a few months after, alas! records her early death as "an event the most afflicting I have ever met with." This young lady was Miss Mary Campbell, aunt to the late Lord Campbell. The minister of Cults next married his cousin, Miss Peggy Wilkie, but she also was taken from him after a very short space of married life.

With such a magnificent income, however, it would have been wrong to have remained a widower, so the Rev. David Wilkie again decided on matrimony. This time his choice fell on Miss Isabella Lister, daughter of Mr. James Lister, farmer, and elder of the church of Cults. And a very wise choice this proved. The mother of Sir David Wilkie was a true, loving, self-sacrificing woman, and although very young when she married "the minister," we are told that she fulfilled all the duties of her station in a manner which *almost* satisfied the rigorous requirements of a Scotch Presbyterian congregation. Her third son, who was baptized by the name of David, after his father, was born on the 18th of November, 1785. To this loving mother the "wee sunny-haired Davie," the raw Scotch artist struggling with poverty in London and the famous David Wilkie whom king and nobles delighted to honour, alike turned for sympathy and consolation. At her knee he learnt to read, but before he learnt to read, he had found out for himself how to draw. He was, in fact, a born artist, and began to scratch figures on the floor of the manse at Cults almost as soon as he could crawl over it. Once when the "wee bairn" was asked what he was doing with a lump of chalk with which he was, as usual, marking on the ground, he replied, "making bonnie Lady Gonie;" and it was discovered, or perhaps imagined by a fond mother, that the rough sketch really bore some resemblance to a certain Lady Balgonie, whose beauty, we may presume, had touched his youthful heart.

To his mother's gentle teaching succeeded that of the schoolmaster of Pitlessie; but in the studies which this worthy man recommended, David

took but little interest, and instead of doing his sums he covered his slate, as he had done the floors and walls of the manse, with portraits of his school-fellows; one of whom, on being asked, in after days, whether they were like, answered, "Oh, like! ah, weel, they were like!" although he was ignorant of the acquired fame of his former companion. So great indeed became his reputation for portraiture amongst his bare-footed comrades, that Allan Cunningham tells us he used at last to make them pay for his performances, and exacted "a pencil, or a marble, or a pen, from all whom he did not sketch of freewill."

The schoolmaster gave the little laddie only "a gentle rebuke" for loving art more than lessons. But this state of things would not do, and Master David was sent, in 1797, to the school at Kettle, to try if Dr. Strachan could not teach him something more useful than drawing heads on slates. But Dr. Strachan's severer injunctions had no more effect than the Pitlessie schoolmaster's "gentle rebukes." The desire for drawing was inborn and irrepressible, and David's reputation for portraiture having preceded him to Kettle, he soon had as many sitters as at Pitlessie. No doubt he here claimed larger prices for his pictures, and bargained for at least three marbles in payment for a striking likeness. He did not stay long at this school; but his master remembered that he "was the most singular scholar he ever attempted to teach," and, "although quiet and demure, had an ear and an eye for all the idle mischief that was in hand." Here and at Pitlessie he no doubt stored up in his memory and in his sketch-book some of those irresistibly comic boys' faces which we see in so many of his works. The scenes about Cults and Pitlessie also delighted the boy's fancy and made vivid pictures in his mind. "He loved to wander in the fields, and by the bank of the brook, gazing on the changing lines of the sky, on the varying shades of the wood, and on the passing traveller, particularly when a soldier in 'old red rags,' or a gipsy wife, with her horn spoons and kettles and asses, came to diversify the road." What better education could a young artist have? He was learning—

“ The beauty and the wonder and the power,
The shapes of things, their colours, lights and shades,
Changes, surprises,—and God made it all ! ”

Yes, this last truth also was writing itself indelibly on the meditative boy's soul, and bringing with it that loving sympathy with the meanest of God's creations which we trace so distinctly in his works. Many of his early sketches were landscapes; but these do not appear to have had the same power, or originality as his figure drawings. The good minister of Culter, we are told, was “ not a little troubled ” when he saw that his son's heart was set on painting. His grandfather tried hard to persuade him to give up what he, very likely, considered an ungodly profession, and the good people to whom his father preached “ did not fail to marvel at the will-o'-the-wisp choice which the son of their minister had made.” But his mother encouraged him to persevere. Like her “ who pondered these things in her heart,” she was the first to perceive her boy's true mission and always encouraged him to fulfil it, although, as we may well believe, with many secret misgivings of mind.

His father, however, soon gave in to his son's steadfast desire to become a painter, or he was, perhaps, talked over to agree to it by his wife, and a painter it was resolved that young David should become. As soon as the minister had agreed to this, he determined to do all in his power to further his son's progress in the profession he had chosen, and accordingly in 1799, when David was only fourteen years of age, he sent him up to Edinburgh to seek admission into the Trustees' Academy.

Proud enough, no doubt, was the boy-painter as he marched into Edinburgh with an introductory letter from the Earl of Leven to Mr. George Thomson, secretary to the Academy, in his pocket. Proud and happy at this prospect of learning painting as an art, but very shy withal, and painfully cast down, when Mr. George Thomson, after examining his drawings, decided that they were not of sufficient merit to entitle him to be admitted into the Institution. But the Earl of Leven interfered, and through his influence

David Wilkie was at last allowed to share the not very large advantages which this school of art afforded.

“ Let the young artist beware of choice,” says the present great Law-giver on Art, and hitherto Wilkie, without having heard the dictum, had sufficiently obeyed it. He had drawn everything that came before him, “ bonnie ladies,” bare-footed urchins, beggars, soldiers, gipsies, father and mother, brother and sister, and pots and pans; innumerable and unclassable, were the objects which covered the nursery walls of the manse, but he had never yet drawn from the antique. This was first set before him at the Edinburgh Academy. At first his success in it does not appear to have been very great, for on his father’s showing a drawing of a foot which his son had copied from some classic model to one of the elders of his church, the good man asked “ what it was,” and on being told, exclaimed, “ a foot! a foot! it’s mair like a fluke (i. e. a flounder) than a foot.” We may hope, however, that the godly elder’s prejudice against the young lad’s “ will-o’-the-wisp” profession somewhat influenced his criticism, for John Burnet, who afterwards engraved Wilkie’s paintings with such appreciative excellence, was a fellow-pupil with him at this Academy, and he says: “ Though behind in skill, Wilkie surpassed, and that from the first, all his companions in comprehending the character of whatever he was set to draw. It was not enough for him to say, ‘ draw that antique foot, or draw this antique hand;’ no, he required to know to what statue the foot or the hand belonged, what was the action and what the sentiment.”

Wilkie made considerable progress whilst at Edinburgh, and gained several small prizes, although the subjects selected for competition by the Academy were not such as to call forth his peculiar genius. A sketch of “ Calisto in the Bath of Diana,” however, gained him a ten guinea premium,¹ although he was unsuccessful in what might be imagined a more congenial subject, namely, a scene from *Macbeth*. The particular scene to be represented being left to the choice of the competitors, Wilkie selected that where

¹ This sketch was afterwards sold for £48 6s.

Lady Macduff defends her son from the murderers; but, as I have said, he failed in obtaining the prize for this, although the head of young Macduff in his drawing was much praised.

Whilst in Edinburgh, Wilkie occupied a small room up two pair of stairs in Nicholson Street. Here, when the two Academy hours were over, to which he was "as punctual as time," he might generally be found, says Allan Cunningham, the Bible and the Gentle Shepherd on a table before him, a few sketches on the walls and his favourite fiddle by his side, to refresh himself with when he got weary of painting, or to put his live models into a good-humour when inclined to rebel at too long a sitting. His music indeed had such "charms to soothe the savage breast," that once it is related when he offered an old beggar-man, to whom he had been playing, a few pence over and above the tune, the old fellow refused them, saying, "Hout! put up your pennies, man; I was e'en as glad o' the spring as ye were!" Would not this make a capital subject for a picture—Sir David Wilkie playing to the beggar-man! The quiet meditative student, whose musings his companions in vain tried to disturb by their jokes at his expense, but who yet liked a "spring" as well as any of them, and the jolly old beggar, the hearts of both warmed by the music of some favourite national air.

Wilkie left Edinburgh in the year 1804, having learnt as much as its Academy could well teach him. He now returned to Cultra, set up his easel in the manse, and began to meditate a picture. I say, set up his easel, but this must be understood entirely in a figurative sense, for David Wilkie at this time did not possess such an article. He, however, found an efficient substitute for one, in an old chest of drawers which stood in his room. Pulling out the centre drawer, he rested the bottom of the frame on which his canvass was stretched on that, whilst the top of the frame leant against the upper part of the chest. An admirable easel, as he himself declared; one on which, at all events, he painted the picture known as "Pitlessie Fair," a picture which, for variety of incident and accurate representation of indi-

vidual character, is considered as only inferior to some of his greatest works. In it he has depicted most of the worthies of his native village. The trouble he had in obtaining the portraits of some of them is very amusing. One Sunday, he saw one of the characters he wanted for his picture nodding in his seat in the kirk. Here was an opportunity not to be lost; and the features of the unconscious slumberer were forthwith transferred to a blank page in the bible; and he afterwards obtained others in a like manner. Such "unseemly" conduct, greatly shocked his father's godly congregation; but when some of its members expostulated with him concerning it, he had the neatest possible justification ready for them; he said that "any one who practised portrait-painting knew that the ear was not engaged in the work, for, being a business of the eye and hand alone, he could draw as well as listen." Truly David was "an ingenious youth," as the Fife folk called him.

During the summer of 1804, which Wilkie passed at the manse, he appears to have painted numerous portraits as well as his great picture, the largest he had as yet attempted, of "Pitlessie Fair." He was now eighteen years of age, and it was highly desirable, no doubt, that he should make some money. Portraiture was decidedly the best means to this end. I do not find that Wilkie in any way despised this branch of his art, nor considered it, as so many young painters are apt to do, as unworthy of his genius. On the contrary, almost all the faces in his pictures were good portraits; but his portraits, it is said, had an air of having stepped out of one of his pictures, and looked as if they played a part in an unrepresented scene. These portraits, let us hope, were more remunerative to the artist than those made at Pitlessie and Kettle schools; but it is doubtful whether he got proportionally more than in his pen and pencil payment days. But, remunerative or unremunerative, the sitters of Cults and its neighbourhood were soon exhausted, and David Wilkie was obliged to seek a wider field for his labours.

He seems at first to have tried his fortune in other parts of Scotland. At Aberdeen he found a few sitters, but could obtain neither colours, nor brushes, nor canvass, so little was art in request in that learned city. Scotland, indeed, at this time, seems to have been either too poor or too cold to foster the genius of her sons, and David Wilkie, like most of her other distinguished men, soon resolved to quit her chilling bosom, and seek a warmer welcome in the south. He accordingly sold "Pitlessie Fair" for £25 to Mr. Kinneir of Kinloch; and with this money in his pocket, with the consent of his father and mother, who, although they grieved to lose their boy, and doubted the wisdom of his great undertaking, yet would not hinder it; with high hope in his heart, and with prayers and blessings accompanying him on his way, David Wilkie sailed for London on the 20th of May, 1805, being then nineteen years and six months old.

Ah, how many a young warrior has gone forth arrayed in like shining armour, but has returned, ere evening, with his breastplate tarnished, his helmet battered, and the bright sword of genius with which he thought to cut his way through the crowd, all notched and stained with unworthy uses; or perhaps, bitterest of all, the supposed keen sword has been proved to be only a sham wooden weapon, and has failed to cut through even a mutton-bone! But this was not to be the case with David Wilkie.

"There is a raw, tall, pale, queer Scotchman come, an odd fellow, but there is something in him; he is called Wilkie;" writes Jackson, a pupil at the Royal Academy, to Haydon, who had just begun his career. Haydon's autobiography, from which many of the following anecdotes of Wilkie are taken, furnishes a striking example of the truth of what I have just said. The intensely vain and unhappy man, who mistook his high aims for high powers, forms a powerful contrast to the modest simple-minded Wilkie, who considered his own success "jest wonderful." Haydon's jealousy of the "raw queer Scotchman" began even before he had seen him. He records his thought on the receipt of Jackson's letter as having been, "Hang the fellow!"

I hope, with his 'something,' he is not going to be a historical painter;" and he was "made uneasy all night by hearing that Fuseli had said, 'dere's someting in de fellow.'" But Wilkie soon proved that he was not going to interfere with Haydon's line of art. There was, indeed, no room for two Haydons in the world; and this trio of Academy students, Jackson, Haydon, and Wilkie, soon became intimate friends.

On coming to London, Wilkie took lodgings at 8, Portland Street, Portland Road, from whence he walked twice a day to the Academy. He thus records his first experiences of London life in a letter to his brother:—

" Dear Brother,

" I am now come to like this place extremely well, for I have everything here I can wish for, and, although I live at a much greater expense than I did in Edinburgh, yet I also find that I live much better. I breakfast at home, and dine at an ordinary, a place where about a dozen gentlemen meet, at two o'clock, and have a dinner served up that only costs them thirteen-pence a head, which I am sure is as cheap as any person can have such a dinner in any part of Great Britain; besides, we have the advantage of hearing all the languages of Europe talked with the greatest fluency, the place being mostly frequented by foreigners; indeed, it is a rare thing to see an Englishman, while there are Corsicans, Italians, French, Germans, Welsh, and Scotch. * * * * *

" D. W."

Dear, contented, economical young Scotchman! The thirteennenny ordinary, served to all nations, was not a very sumptuous repast, but what it lacked in cookery it made up, no doubt, in character and humour,—qualities which Wilkie appreciated more than gastronomical excellence. One of the constant guests at this ordinary, we are told, is represented in "The Village Politicians," and no doubt he picked up many other

curiosities of character at this place. Of his academy studies he writes to a friend:—

“ Dear Sir,

“ I am still attending the Royal Academy, which I make a point of doing from morning till night. * * * I have got acquainted with some of the students, who seem to know a good deal of the cant of criticism, and are very seldom disposed to allow anything merit that is not two hundred years old. I have seen a great many very fine pictures of the old school, which have given me a taste very different from that which I had when I left Edinburgh, and I am now convinced that no picture can possess real merit unless it is a just representation of nature.

“ D. W.”

But although Wilkie found living in London and having “everything he wished for” very pleasant, he found it also very dear. “I need not tell you to be careful of your expense,” writes his father. No, there was no need to tell the hard-working young student that; but, be as careful as he might, he found the small sum he had brought with him from Scotland fast dwindling away, and he saw no means as yet of replacing it. He had, it is true, sold one picture, which had formed part of the property he brought with him to London, and which he had prevailed on a shopkeeper to exhibit, with a few other small paintings made at Cults, in his shop window at Charing Cross. But this picture, which it is said was “The Village Recruit,” brought him only six guineas, and his hopes of gaining money by portrait painting became very faint when he saw the great rivals who were already in the field. His health also got very weak at this time, and altogether poor Wilkie did not find the winter in London nearly so pleasant as the summer had been. He writes to his father, January, 1806:—

“ I am now become quite inured to the difficulties of living in London; for I have been several times reduced within the bounds of the last half-guinea, and have been under the necessity of living upon credit.”

A dreadful trial to his independent Scotch spirit! But if this was the state of things he acknowledged to his father, we may presume that the real condition of his affairs was even more dispiriting; for he always wrote home in the most cheerful manner that he could, in order not to depress his parents with his own anxieties.

But better fortune is dawning: soon he will be able to pay some one to clean his boots, though at present he finds it “ saves expense ” to polish them himself. He also finds, no doubt, that it saved expense to be his own model; for Haydon tells us, that going one morning by appointment to breakfast with Wilkie, he found him “ sitting stark naked on the side of his bed, drawing himself by help of a looking-glass.” And on being asked about the breakfast, he took no notice, but simply replied to the “ important question ” by saying, “ It’s jest copital practice ! ” And another time, when Bannister, the actor, called, Wilkie was sitting on a low seat dressed as an old woman. He was not the least put out at being caught, but replied to Bannister by saying: “ I know you very well; but you see I can’t move, lest I spoil the folds of my petticoat. I am, for the present, an old woman very much at your service.”

But Fame was now fast approaching, though the Goddess of Fortune still for many years lagged most disgracefully behind. In the height of his success, after he had painted “ The Rent Day ” and most of the pictures by which he is best known and loved, I find that he returned his income at £500 a-year.

The first gleam of the succeeding sunlight reached Wilkie by means of Lord Mansfield, to whom he was introduced by a distant relation named Stodart. This nobleman, on seeing a study of “ The Village Politicians ” in Wilkie’s studio, asked what would be the price for a finished painting of the

subject? Wilkie answered, fifteen guineas, to which the Earl made no answer. Wilkie, however, proceeded to paint the picture, on the chance of his Lordship's accepting it, and so successful was he in its delineation, that all who saw it were obliged to acknowledge its surpassing excellence. Jackson, who seems to have been totally free from the detracting envy which marred Haydon's friendship for Wilkie, was so delighted with his fellow-student's performance, that he begged his own kind patrons, Lord Mulgrave and Sir George Beaumont to go and see "a young Scotchman who was second to no Dutchman that ever bore a palette on his thumb." "We must see this Scottish wonder," said Sir George, and both noblemen at once accompanied Jackson to Wilkie's lodgings, and became from henceforth his most enthusiastic admirers, and his warmest and most generous friends.

The approbation of Sir George Beaumont was indeed a reputation in itself. His judgment at this period was accepted as irreversible in all matters of art; although succeeding critics have doubted the sound taste of a man, one of whose rules was that "there should be at least one brown tree in every landscape." However that may be, his criticisms of Wilkie seem to have been always appreciative, just, and useful to the artist, who often adopted the suggestions of his noble-hearted friend.

"Wilkie was now up in high life," writes Haydon, "and if a young man wanted to be puffed at dinners until Academicians became black in the face, Lord Mulgrave and Sir George were the men;" he then adds, with a perfectly unjustifiable sneer: "The winter of 1806 approached and Wilkie began to make a great noise. Sir George described him as 'a young man who came to London, saw a picture of Teniers, went home, and at once painted the "Village Politicians." At once! my dear Lady Mulgrave, at once!' and off all crowded to the little parlour of 8, Norton Street, to see the picture painted by the young Scotchman, who never painted a picture or saw one, until the morning when he saw the Teniers, and then rushed home and produced the Politicians!"

The picture was sent to the Academy. The morning after the Exhibition opened, there appeared a very favourable notice of it in one of the papers. Haydon was the first of the trio of friends to see this, and immediately rushed to Wilkie's lodgings to bear him the welcome intelligence. He met Jackson on his way, who accompanied him. "We both bolted into Wilkie's room," he writes, "and I roared out, 'Wilkie, my boy, your name's in the paper!'" "Is it, re-al-ly?" said David; and finding that it "re-al-ly" was, the three took hands and danced round the table until they were tired. On going to the Academy, they found a large crowd round the picture: there was "no getting in sideways, or edgeways." It was, in fact, *the* picture of the year. But Wilkie seems at first to have been more bewildered than delighted at his success, and when he saw the crowd, he kept on saying to his two friends, "dear, dear, its jest wonderful!"

It will be remembered that Wilkie had asked the Earl of Mansfield fifteen guineas as the price of the completed painting of "The Village Politicians," and that his Lordship had neither assented nor demurred to this price. Now, however, when the country was ringing with the young Scotchman's praises, Lord Mansfield wrote, claiming the picture as his for the sum of fifteen guineas. To this Wilkie replied that that sum had not been acceded to by his Lordship, who had desired him "to consult his friends as to the charge he ought to make," and that the most eminent artists whom he had consulted "considered thirty pounds as but a very moderate price for the picture." The Earl came forthwith to Norton Street. The interview between him and Wilkie, Allan Cunningham says, was characteristic. The Earl reminded Wilkie that he was a youth unknown to fame when he had ordered the picture, and that he had "hazarded his reputation in art by giving him a commission which, upon his honour, he considered a settled matter at the price of fifteen guineas." "When I named that price," said Wilkie, "your Lordship only replied, 'consult your friends.' I have consulted them, and they all say, I ought not to take

less than thirty guineas; but since your Lordship appeals to your honour, my memory must be in the wrong; the price therefore is fifteen guineas." The Earl, however, as soon as he had gained his point, gave Wilkie a cheque for £31 10s., with which he appears to have been quite satisfied, although he had had much higher offers made him.

He writes at this time to his brother Thomas:—

" Dear Brother,

" When I first came to London, I had scarcely a friend: the five recommendations I had were of little or no use. I have now in one twelvemonth, without interest or solicitation, gained more friends and more employment than all the recommendations in the world could have got me. The picture I have now in the Exhibition was painted from the poem of ' Will and Jean,' when they meet in the ale-house. It was done for the Earl of Mansfield; but I am sorry to say we had a great deal of cavilling about the price; and his Lordship, for the sake of getting it a few guineas cheaper, has done himself more injury than he has done me.

" D. W."

In spite of Haydon's assertion to the contrary, Wilkie does not appear to have been much uplifted by his sudden success. " He was silent," Allan Cunningham says, " amid all the praises showered upon him by the press and by the people; and his only return for flattery, of which few were sparing, was a faint smile and a customary shake of the head." He may certainly have indulged in the unaccustomed luxury of a new coat, which, probably, is the meaning of his kind friend's statement that he " dressed like a dandy, but in vain tried to look one;" but as the same friend has just before held up to ridicule the comical appearance of Wilkie in a coat he had lent him, in order that he might make a respectable appearance at Barry's

funeral, we cannot accuse the poor fellow of reckless extravagance on this account, particularly as his first care, on obtaining a little money, was to discharge a small debt to Lord Crawford which his father had incurred on his behalf.

That his simple, kind heart was not spoilt by the adulation he received is, I think, sufficiently proved by the following anecdote. It is so characteristic of the man, and is related so graphically by Haydon, that I cannot help giving it entire and in his own words:—

“Now that he was richer than he had been for some time,” says Haydon,¹ “his first thoughts were turned towards his mother and sister. Something of vast importance was brewing, we could not imagine what. I feared a large picture before I was ready. But at last I, as his particular friend, received an invitation to tea, and after one of our usual discussions on art, he took me into another room, and there, spread out in glittering triumph, were two new bonnets, two new shawls, ribbons and satins, and heaven knows what, to astonish the natives of Cults, and to enable Wilkie’s venerable father, like the Vicar of Wakefield, to preach a sermon on the vanity of woman, whilst his wife and daughter were shining in the splendour of fashion from the dressmakers at the west end of London. I never saw such amiable simplicity of rustic triumph as glittered in Wilkie’s expressive face. I felt my attachment increased. I saw through his selfish exterior that there was a heart, certainly, underneath; but I am not quite sure after thirty-six years! Then came the packing, then the dangers by sea, and the dangers by land. Then the landlady and her daughter, and all her friends, were in consultation deep, and profound were the discussions how to secure ‘those sweet bonnets from being crushed, and those charming ribbons from sea-water.’ All the time Wilkie stood by, eager and interested beyond belief, till his conscience began to prick him, and he said to me,—‘I have jest been very idle;’ and so for a

¹ Haydon’s Autobiography, page 45.

couple of days he set to, heart and soul, at the 'Blind Fiddler' for Sir George."

Dear, conscientious, "idle" young painter! It is clear that Sir George Beaumont's and Lord Mulgrave's patronage has not done thee much harm. Both these noblemen had given Wilkie a commission for a picture on the day of their first visit to him. The subject of Sir George Beaumont's picture was, as we have seen, "The Blind Fiddler," whilst that of Lord Mulgrave's was "The Rent Day." Both these celebrated pictures were painted by Wilkie when he was two-and-twenty years of age, "The Village Politicians" having been exhibited in 1806, when he was only twenty-one. Of the various merits and beauties of these great works I shall say nothing. It would indeed be simple impertinence for me to extol pictures which the world is never tired of admiring, and whose power to charm is sufficiently attested by the numerous gazers they attract.

Such criticisms and remarks on these and Wilkie's succeeding works as have appeared to me to have interest, may be found in the page of letter-press prefixed to each Photograph. Simple descriptions of pictures are, at best, very dull things, and in this case are quite unnecessary, as Wilkie's works require no explanation, even to the meanest understanding. "Wilkie," says Ruskin, "becomes popular, like Scott, because he touches passions which all feel, and expresses truths which all can recognize." On these painted truths, then, it is not my intention to dwell. It is the man, more than the genius, whom I here desire to depict; and if any one, after reading this little account, should turn to the Photographs with renewed interest, my purpose will have been accomplished.

"The Blind Fiddler" was exhibited in 1807. It is said that the Academicians had already grown jealous of Wilkie's fame. Whether or not this be true, it is certain that the picture was not hung in a like good position to that which "The Village Politicians" had occupied the year before. It was also observed that two brilliantly coloured paintings were

hung one on each side of it, as if to throw the poor Fiddler into still deeper shade. But, if such were the design, it certainly missed its aim. "Jupiter presented to Diana her Bow and Arrows" without any witnesses to his politeness, and "Flora unveiled by the Zephyrs," was admired by them alone, whilst "The Blind Fiddler," on the contrary, attracted large crowds of gazers.

Shortly after the exhibition opened, Wilkie went on a visit to Cults. We can imagine the delight of both father and mother at seeing their boy return, with fame for his travelling companion. His success had, by this time, penetrated even into the stolid minds of the worthies of Cults and Cupar, who now, instead of censuring the "will-o'-the-wisp" profession of the minister's son, pressed eagerly to see him, and offer their congratulations, feeling proud rather than disgusted at having been represented in his "Pitlessie Fair." Human nature, it is delightful to find, is much the same in Scotch elders as in less rigid developments of our species. This visit to Scotland was afterwards characterized by Wilkie as the happiest time of his life, although during a great part of it he was laid up with fever at the manse.

In October, however, he is again back in London, and hard at work on the "Alfred in the Neatherd's Cottage," "The Card-players," painted for the Duke of Gloucester, and "The Rent Day," to which he was still adding finishing touches. He could not, indeed, afford to be long idle, for, as I have said before, the money he received for his productions was very small in amount. He writes to his brother John, who is in India, "You will very naturally conclude from the accounts you have most likely heard of the fame that I have acquired, that I must be rapidly accumulating a fortune. It is, however, I am sorry to say, very far from being the case. What I have received since I commenced my career has been but barely sufficient to support me, and I do not live extravagantly either. Indeed, my present situation is the most singular that can well be imagined. I believe I do not

exaggerate when I say that I have at least forty pictures bespoke, and some by the highest people in the land; yet, after all, I have seldom got anything for any picture I have yet painted."

This letter was written after his return from Scotland, and when all the pictures I have as yet mentioned had been disposed of. But the fact that his work was insufficiently paid seems to have been more Wilkie's own fault than that of his purchasers, who continually sent him double the price he had himself put on a picture. His constant and kind friend, Sir George Beaumont, often scolds him for the extremely low price which he affixed to his productions; and Lord Mulgrave, whilst sending a cheque for double the sum named for a picture, says, "I intend it as an admonition to avoid such disinterestedness for the future." It is plain from this, I think, that Wilkie had nothing of the grasping character often imputed to his countrymen. He is always "careful of the expense," however, but whether his carefulness ever fell to meanness, it is difficult to say. Haydon asserts that it did; but envy and jealousy so completely blinded his eyes to Wilkie's real merits, that every statement he makes with regard to him requires to be received with extreme caution. At all events, Wilkie's stinginess is not proved by the fact that during their visit to Paris he refused to pay postilions, waiters, &c, with the same recklessness as Haydon, who evidently wished to pass for a great "milord."

In September, 1808, Wilkie went on a visit to the Marquis of Lansdowne, at Southampton Castle, where he painted the portrait of the Marchioness. Henceforth his journal often contains the record of visits to the seats of various members of the aristocracy, whose "elegant hospitality," to use the correct conventional phrase, he enjoyed. But no "hospitality," I expect, was half so much enjoyed as the delightful freedom and ease of Coleorton and Dunmow, the seats of Sir George Beaumont, to one of which places Wilkie was often carried off by Sir George, when he thought that he had been painting too long, or was too weak in health to remain in London.

Haydon gives us a charming picture of the life at Coleorton, where he and Wilkie spent a delightful fortnight together in the summer of 1809. "We dined," he says, "with the Claude and Rembrandt before us, and breakfasted with the Rubens landscape, and did nothing, morning, noon, or night, but think of painting, talk of painting, dream of painting, and wake to paint again. We lingered on the stairs in going up to bed, and studied the effect of candle-light upon each other; wondered how the shadows could be best got as clear as they looked. Sometimes Sir George made Wilkie stand with the light in the proper direction, and he and I studied the colour; sometimes he held the candle himself and made Wilkie join me; at another time he would say: 'Stop where you are; come here, Wilkie. Asphaltum thinly glazed over on a cool preparation I *think* would do it.'" Sir George Beaumont was himself an artist, in spite of his one brown tree in every landscape, and he and his guests used to compete each day which should produce the best study. Haydon one day paints the head of a horse, and has "the satisfaction," he tells us, "of demolishing their little bits of study, for the size of life, effectually done, is sure to carry off the prize." Wilkie, however, the next day produces an old woman, who "divides the laurels" with the horse. But the delightful fortnight is soon over, and Sir George is left lamenting that he must now "attend to his coal-mines," whilst the two friends—who before this visit have had a tour in Devonshire together, and have made a pilgrimage to Plymton, the birth-place of Sir Joshua,—return to London.

Soon after the visits to Coleorton, Wilkie was elected Associate of the Royal Academy (Nov. 6, 1809). He was always one of the most punctual and constant students of the Royal Academy, and long after he had attained the greatest proficiency in his art, we find him still working there as indefatigably as if he were learning its rudiments. This being the case, he was very pleased at being admitted into the ranks of the Academy, although it seems he did not like the trouble of calling on the members to ask for their votes.

On the 29th of September of this year he records in his Journal: "I this day began my picture of 'The Alehouse Door,' since called "The Village Festival," and for the next six months its pages are almost entirely filled with accounts of the progress of this picture. In the spring of 1810, however, he was obliged to lay this great work aside for a time, whilst he got ready a picture for the Academy Exhibition. This picture, "The Man with the Girl's Cap," or "The Wardrobe Ransacked," he was afterwards persuaded by some of his friends not to exhibit, they being fearful, it appears, of its not sustaining his reputation against the rivalry of Bird, whose pictures many of the Academicians, whether from want of judgment, or from jealousy of their associate's achievements, were now crying up as being far superior to Wilkie's. Haydon tells us that Wilkie took their injurious conduct so much to heart, that "from sheer mortification he sank down to the brink of the grave." Wilkie does not seem to me to have been a man to fall into "the completest despair" because another man was for a time unjustly preferred before him. He was a modest, diffident man, always willing to listen to his friends' opinions on his pictures, and when they advised him to withdraw this one from exhibition he silently, Allan Cunningham says, and "in his own quiet way, resigned his place to the new candidate." But that this did not drive him to despair is proved by the entry in his Journal for April 9th, 1810, the day on which he withdrew his picture. It says: "Painted from 12 till 5, and went over the figure of the man searching his pocket in my picture of 'The Alehouse Door,' and made it a more suitable colour."

Before the summer was over, however, whether from "sheer mortification," or from over-work (which is the more probable of the two), Wilkie fell very ill. The kindness of his friends to him at this time proves how much he was beloved. Sir George Beaumont, thinking that he may be in want of funds, writes, and in the most delicate manner possible, saying that he considers himself still in Wilkie's debt, encloses a cheque for £50; and

this being refused, he next tempts him with some peculiar old port, without which, he says, "it is not in the power of man to colour well, or paint with effect." Joanna Baillie and her sister also insist upon giving up their pleasant house at Hampstead that Wilkie may occupy it and have change of air, and his kind landlady, Mrs. Coppard, nurses him with motherly care. But in spite of all his friends' attention, and his physician Dr. Baillie's skill, Wilkie's health continued for some time very delicate. He was, however, able to send two pictures to the Exhibition of 1811, namely, "A Humorous Scene," and "Portrait of a Gamekeeper;" the latter painted whilst he was staying at Dunmow, after his visit to Hampstead. In the February preceding the opening of the Exhibition of 1811, Wilkie had been elected a Royal Academician, but his weak health prevented him from exhibiting any great work this year in commemoration of his newly-acquired honours, or to prove, if any further proof were needed more than he had already given, that the young Scotchman of six-and-twenty was as worthy of rank amongst the forty as any grey-beard in the number. This fact was, however, sufficiently manifested by an exhibition of his pictures which Wilkie opened on the 1st of May, 1812, and which attracted numerous visitors to 87, Pall Mall, to the great indignation, we are told, of his brother R. A.s. In this same year appeared Haydon's furious attack on the Academy, in which, in spite of Wilkie's repeated remonstrances, he detailed that Society's "heartless, ungrateful, and cruel treatment" of Wilkie as well as of himself. Can it be wondered at that Wilkie was greatly annoyed at having his name associated with such unwarrantable abuse? He wrote Haydon, however, a most wise and temperate letter on the subject, regretting "the mad or punishable" attack, as Fuseli had called it, evidently more for Haydon's sake than his own. "Wilkie was really wretched," Haydon says, "as he was sincerely attached to me." He forgets, I suppose, that he has a minute before accused him of utter heartlessness.

On the 1st of December, 1812, died the good minister of Cults, and

soon after this event it was determined that Wilkie's widowed mother and his much loved sister Helen should come up and live with him in London. The brother's and sister's joy at this arrangement was very decided, but the good mother was for a time "perplexed." She could not easily uproot herself from her native soil, from the manse of Cults, from Pitlessie Mill, where her father, a hale old man, was still living, and where every association of her life was fixed. But her love for her "wee Davie" finally prevailed, and in August, 1813, we find the dear old lady, comfortably established at 24, Phillimore Place, Kensington, with much of the old furniture of the manse around her. Concerning the removal of this furniture from Scotland David Wilkie gives most particular directions. He writes to his sister: "Of the kitchen furniture I do not know that you should bring any, except the old brass pan for making jelly, and anything else you may consider of value. There is an old Dutch press in one of the closets that my mother got from Mrs. Birrell; what state is that in? If it were not an article of great weight, might not that be brought?" He probably is looking at these household relics with the covetous eye of a painter, for he constantly introduces such things into his pictures, and an old copper saucepan, no doubt the one here alluded to, we are told often sat for its likeness. His "pan and spoon style" had indeed been already ridiculed by critics. But little cared David Wilkie for the sneers of critics, or the cabals of artists, when he beheld his loving mother and sister seated at his "ain fireside," or listened to their profound criticisms on the painting—"The Bagpiper"—on which he was now happily engaged; his great picture of "Blind Man's Buff," painted for the Prince Regent, having been exhibited in the preceding May. Besides "The Bagpiper," we find from his Journal that Wilkie must have painted, during this winter, "Duncan Gray" entirely, completed "The Letter of Introduction," taken portraits of himself, his brother, and sister, made several sketches, including a "Study of an Old Woman," (perhaps the one which rivalled Haydon's horse at Coleorton), began

a sketch of "The Distraint for Rent," as well as a portrait of Mrs. Coppard and family.

After this hard winter's work, Wilkie, as soon as the Academy exhibition was open, to which he had sent "Duncan Gray," and "The Letter of Introduction," determined on having a holiday; and he and Haydon, whose "Solomon" had just achieved a "glorious victory," agreed to visit Paris together,—to visit Paris! the Paris of 1814, which Napoleon had just quitted for Elba! The Paris whose streets, so recently washed with the blood of the revolution, now presented a most picturesque and bizarre appearance, as soldiers of all nations, Russians, Cossacks, Tartars, Poles, Prussians, English, rode up and down them. "It might be said," says Haydon, "that when we arrived at Paris the ashes of Napoleon's last fire were hardly cool; the last candle by which he had read was hardly extinguished; the very book he had last read was to be seen turned down where he left it." No wonder the two artists' minds were excited by these mighty associations; every corner in the street had its history, every man they met could tell some story of Napoleon's wars. Haydon's enthusiasm, as may be imagined, knew no bounds, and even the placid Wilkie was often "legitimately in raptures;" he was constantly exclaiming, "What a fool Napoleon was to lose such a country! Dear, dear!"

The excitement and fatigue of all this novelty proved too much for Wilkie, whose feeble constitution soon gave way under any unusual effort. A doctor had to be sought. A great physician was at last found playing dominoes in a café: and Haydon lugged him off to Wilkie's sick-bed. "Here ensued a scene worthy of Molière. I spoke French better than I understood it; Wilkie did neither the one nor the other. At last the doctor, in a perfect fury at our not understanding him, thundered out, 'Parlez vous Latin?' 'Oui, Monsieur.' 'Ah, ah!' and soon, in spite of our different pronunciations, we came to the point." The doctor's prescription turned out to be a bottle of lemonade, which being, at all events,

harmless, (which his drugs might not have been), Wilkie very soon got better, and when Haydon returned after a few hours' absence, he found him sitting up, "laughing ready to die," and trying to teach his landlady English. "Monsieur," said Madame when Haydon entered, "votre ami me moque." "Comment, Madame?" She then held up a paper on which Wilkie had written,—“Peter Piper picked a peck of pepper off a pewter plate, &c,” which it appeared Wilkie was in vain endeavouring to make her pronounce. Haydon kept up the joke, and poor madame, no doubt, thought English a more barbarous language than ever.

They visit the Louvre. "I flew up three steps at a time," says Haydon, "springing with fury at each remembrance of a fine picture. When I got to the top, there was Wilkie with the coolest deliberation trotting up at his usual pace. I rated him for his want of feeling; I might just as well have scolded the column. I soon left him at some Jan Steen, while I never stopped until I stood before 'the Transfiguration.'"

They witness the celebration of the *Fête Dieu*, the first Sunday on which the shops of Paris had been closed since the Revolution. They go to the theatre and see a French version of "Hamlet," and are hooted at for being "les Anglais!" They go everywhere, in fact, and see all that there is to be seen; Wilkie "fortified" with a French dictionary, and Haydon elevated by his superior acquaintance with the language which he can speak but cannot comprehend. Haydon's account of this trip is indeed so vivid and interesting that I would fain quote more of it, but the allotted space of this little Memoir will not hold the great Haydon as well as the modest Wilkie.

Wilkie's journal of the same tour is, on the contrary, very dull. It is, as is usual with him, a mere record of events, without any personality stamped upon them. This is the reason I have always chosen his friend's account of his proceedings rather than his own. We learn, in fact, much more of Wilkie from Haydon, than we do from Wilkie. The latter, as Göethe said

of himself, "never thinks about thinking." He tells us what he is doing, but never what his thought is like. His journal, indeed, may be characterized as being "*objective*," whilst that of Haydon is intensely "*subjective*," telling us not only his thoughts, hopes, and mighty aspirations, but also his prayers, "the secret out-pourings of his soul." But the one is very much more amusing than the other; and it is curious to note the different way in which the same event strikes the two dissimilar minds. I have already given Haydon's account of the doctor's visit. Compare it with Wilkie's: "June 3rd. Found myself so much fatigued with the walking I had had for the last three days, that I was unable to go out except to the restaurateur's. I employed myself the greater part of the day in attempting to speak French to the mistress of the house. Finding that I had not yet recovered from my fatigue, I sent for *un médecin*, who prescribed for me a bottle of lemonade, mixed with some drug, of course, which, whether effective or not, had at least the advantage of being very well tasted." Molière could scarcely have written a scene from this description. That Wilkie had a strong perception of the humorous is shown in many of his pictures; his boyish delight in a bit of mischief has been already mentioned, nor does he yet appear to have quite lost this taste, witness the anecdote of Peter Piper picked a peck of pepper. Many shrewd observations of his are also recorded; as his saying, when Haydon asked him his impression of the English amidst the assemblage of all nations at Paris, "Dear, dear, they jest look as if they had a balance at their bankers';" but altogether, although it may have taken something less than a "surgical operation" to get a joke into him, I do not fancy that Wilkie was very quick at understanding this species of wit.

One more picture from the Haydon gallery of Wilkie in Paris, and that shall be the last. "Notwithstanding Paris was filled with all nations of the earth, the greatest oddity in it was unquestionably David Wilkie; his horrible French, his strange, tottering, feeble, pale look, his carrying about

his prints to make bargains with print-sellers, his resolute determination never to leave the restaurants till he had got all his change right to a centime, his long disputes about sous and demi-sous with the *dame du comptoir*, whilst Madame tried to cheat him, and as she pressed her pretty ringed fingers on his arm without making the least impression, her 'Mais, Monsieur,' and his Scotch 'Mais, Madame,' were worthy of Molière."

David Wilkie, indeed, throughout all his life seems to have been somewhat insensible to the charms and blandishments of the fair sex. Twice he receives a Valentine, each time, as he thinks, in the same hand-writing; but although he duly sets down the fact in his journal, he never betrays the slightest curiosity to know who the fair sender may be, simply stating that the verses were signed Helen. Certainly, a friend of his, Mrs. Anthony Todd Thomson, supposed at one time that he had "a decided partiality, to call it by no warmer name," for a beautiful friend of hers; but her supposition seems chiefly founded on Wilkie's having admired the young lady as she flitted by him in a ball-room, and having remarked that her "head and throat were matchless." This remark savours more of the critical artist than the adoring lover; but Mrs. Thomson thought otherwise, and advised Wilkie "to try his fortune," to which, with his customary modesty, Wilkie replied that he would not presume; but, I fancy, the idea of doing so had never entered his head until she put it there. It is strange, though, that with a heart capable of warm domestic attachment, as is shown by his love for his mother and sister, Wilkie should never have married. Whether he was ever "in love," no one knows. He was not a man to record such a state of feeling in his diary.

The winter of 1814-15 finds Wilkie busily at work at the "Distraining for Rent." This picture had been suggested to him by one of his own paintings having been seized at his Exhibition in Pall Mall, for rent due from some former tenant, and he had to pay £32 before he could get the picture, "The Village Festival," back. In 1816 he made a tour in Holland

with Raimbach, the engraver. He thus describes the impression this country made upon him, in a letter to Sir George Beaumont:—

“ One of the first circumstances that struck me wherever I went was what you had prepared me for, the resemblance that everything wore to the Dutch and Flemish pictures. On leaving Ostend, not only the people, the houses and trees, but whole tracts of country reminded one of the landscapes of Teniers, and on getting further into the country, this was only relieved by the pictures of Rubens, Wouvermans, and some other masters, taking his place. I thought I could trace the particular districts in Holland where Ostade, Jan Stein, Cuyp, and Rembrandt had studied, and could fancy the very spot where pictures of other masters had been painted. Indeed, nothing seemed new to me in the whole country, for I had been familiar with it all on canvas; and what one could not help wondering at was, that these old masters should have been able to draw the materials of so beautiful a variety of art, from so contracted and monotonous a country. D. W.”

In the following year, Wilkie enjoyed his summer holiday in Scotland, and revisited all the scenes of his boyhood. He became acquainted with several very celebrated men during this visit, amongst whom were Sir Walter Scott and Dr. Chalmers. Of the latter he tells rather an amusing story in one of his letters to his brother. Wilkie and Dr. Chalmers had agreed to travel together from Glasgow to Lanark, and were just setting off, when a quakeress asked leave to join them in having a postchaise. This was accorded, and the three proceeded on their way, evidently pleased with each other's society. As they drove from Hamilton, along the Clyde, Wilkie began to look out for the scenes described in *Old Mortality*. Dr. Chalmers had not read the book, and on Wilkie's endeavouring to persuade him to do so, the staid quakeress gently reminded him of what she thought his duty, saying, “ Doctor, thee hast not time to read these kind of books.” The world was still, at this time, uncertain as to the great author of “ these kind of books;” and Wilkie, during his visit to Abbotsford, writes: “ There is

nothing but amusement from morning till night; and if Mr. Scott is really writing 'Rob Roy,' it must be while we are sleeping. He is either out planting trees, superintending the masons, or erecting fences the whole of the day." Sir Walter Scott, to whom Wilkie has been so often compared for his subtle delineation of character, and for the mingled humour and pathos of his scenes, was a great admirer of Wilkie's genius. His invitation to him to Abbotsford is very characteristic. After welcoming him back to his native land, and expatiating on its beauties, he says: "I hope on your return (i.e. from the Highlands) that you will pay me a visit. I have my hand in the mortar-tub, but I have a chamber in the wall for you, besides a most hearty welcome. I have also one or two old jockies with one foot in the grave, and know of a herd's hut or two tottering to the fall, which you will find picturesque." What artist could resist the "old jockies" and the "herd's hut?"

Whilst at Abbotsford, Wilkie paid a visit to the Ettrick Shepherd, who then lived in a small cottage on the Yarrow. Mr. Laidlaw, who accompanied Wilkie and introduced him to Hogg, did not mention that he was the painter, and Hogg, says Mr. Laidlaw, probably took him, as he had done a great poet, for a horse-couper. At last, however, a suspicion of the fact dawned on him. "Laidlaw," he exclaimed, "this is no' the great Mr. Wilkie?" "It's just the great Mr. Wilkie," replied Laidlaw. "Mr. Wilkie," exclaimed the Shepherd, seizing him by the hand, "I cannot tell how proud I am to see you in my house, and how glad I am that you are so young a man." When Scott was told this anecdote, "The fellow!" said he, "it was the finest compliment ever paid to man."

It was during this visit to Abbotsford that Wilkie painted the well-known picture of "Sir Walter Scott and his Family" in the character of south-country peasants. This picture, when exhibited in London, was visited by George IV; and Sir Walter, in his account of the various characters represented in it, tells an amusing anecdote relating to one of

these, an old shepherd called Thomas Scott, who was mightily jealous of a country neighbour who assumed airs of superiority on the strength of having seen the late king. But after this picture had been exhibited, he one day walks over to his rival's cottage, and says: "Andro, man! did ye anes sey the King?" "In troth did I, Tam," answered Andro; "sit down, and I'll tell ye a' about it. Ye sey, I was at Lonnon, in a place they ca' the Park, that is no' like a hog-fence, or like the four nooked parks in this country!" "Hout awa," said Thomas, "I have heard a' that before; I only came o'er the knowe to tell you, that if you have seen the King, the King has seen me (me)!" "And so," adds Scott, "he returned with a jocund heart, assuring his friends 'it had done him muckle gude to settle accounts with Andro.'" Wilkie indeed must have presented many a humble individual to Royalty.

"The Penny Wedding," for which he had collected materials whilst in Scotland, was Wilkie's next great work, and was shortly followed by the "Reading of the Will," a subject which had been suggested to him many years before by Liston and Bannister, the actors. This latter picture strikes me as being more in the style of Hogarth than any of Wilkie's other paintings. The indignant old lady, who is quitting the apartment in a fury, is quite a Hogarthian subject; the coquettish air of the young widow also is just such as that great master would have represented; and altogether the picture has more of a dramatic character than is usual with Wilkie, who more often tells a story than, like Hogarth, represents a drama. I cannot, indeed, except in this single instance, see the similarity which some critics have said exists between Hogarth and Wilkie. They seem to me to have looked at human nature from a totally different point of view: Hogarth beholds it in its moral blackness, and scourges its crimes with his fierce satires. He will hold no truce with the Devil, but throws his paint-box at him, as Luther had done his ink-stand. But no such conflict with Apollyon was permitted to the weaker powers of David Wilkie. Humanity was

visible to him in its more loving aspect, and his work was to gently reprove, teach, and sympathize; but more especially was it given to him by exquisite touches of nature to make "the whole world kin."

The "Reading of the Will" was painted for the King of Bavaria, but George IV, when he saw it, admired it so much that he wished Wilkie to send a duplicate copy to the King of Bavaria, and to let him have the original. To this arrangement, however, Wilkie could not accede, as the picture undoubtedly belonged to the King of Bavaria. A long correspondence took place on the subject between the two courts, but finally the "Reading of the Will" was sent to Munich, and Wilkie had the pleasure of hearing from the Secretary of the King of Bavaria, "*Qu'il a fait un plaisir inexprimable au Roi,*" and that "*Sa Majesté l'a fait placer dans sa chambre à coucher où tout le monde admire le beau travail de cet artiste célèbre.*"

But whilst this, and several other smaller pictures were getting completed, Wilkie was at the same time working at and collecting materials for the great national picture of "The Waterloo Gazette," which the Duke of Wellington had commissioned him to paint. "At the time," says Mrs. Thomson, "that Mr. Wilkie was employed on his picture of 'The Chelsea Pensioners,' we lived on his road from Kensington to Chelsea College, and remember his frequent and toilsome walks to that low region called Jew's Row, to sketch an old projecting house, under the shadow of which some of his groups were placed. It was a fine summer, and as he returned from his almost daily visit he used generally to call and drink tea with us; and taking out of his small portfolio some bits of tinted paper, would show us his progress—a very slow progress it was. Such a small portion of the scene was visible on the paper, that I used to say to him 'Mr. Wilkie, I fear you will never finish your picture!' His customary answer was, 'Indeed, I am awkward and slow at anything like landscape, but when that is settled, I have all the rest here!' pointing to his forehead. He spoke so meekly of his own prospects and talents, and looked so grateful even for our encouragement,

that no one would have thought that the greatest artist of even that day was seated by our tea-table."

The following entries occur in Wilkie's Journal concerning this picture and its price, which, as they illustrate the strict business regularity of the great Duke, appear to me to have interest.

" May 20, 1822. Received a note from the Duke of Wellington, asking what he was indebted for the picture. This picture contains sixty figures, and took me full sixteen months' constant work, besides months of study to collect and arrange. It was ordered by the Duke in the summer of 1816, the year after the battle of Waterloo. His Grace's object was to have British soldiers regaling at Chelsea; and in justice to him, as well as to myself, it is but right to state that the introduction of the Gazette was a subsequent idea of my own to unite the interest, and give importance to the business of the picture.

" May 22nd. Sent the picture to Apsley House, with a bill of the price, which, after mature consideration, I put at £1260, i. e. twelve hundred guineas.

" May 23. Was told by Sir Willoughby Gordon that his Grace was satisfied to give twelve hundred guineas for the picture, and gave Sir W. leave to tell me so.

" May 25. At the Duke's request, waited upon him at Apsley House, when he counted out the money to me in bank notes, on receiving which I told his Grace that I considered myself handsomely treated by him throughout."

No private secretary in this instance is bidden to write and tell Wilkie that the picture has made its purchaser "*un plaisir inexprimable*." The stern old Duke is simply "satisfied" to pay its price, and himself counts out the bank notes for that purpose, not increasing it a single penny, we may be sure, as so many of Wilkie's noble patrons are accustomed to do.

Wilkie, it seems, had adopted a sort of time-table arrangement, by which

to fix the price of his pictures. He valued his time as being worth £1000 a-year, and then proceeded to charge according to the length of time each picture had taken.

The August of 1822 finds Wilkie in Scotland, awaiting the anticipated arrival of George IV, with the intention of embodying some scene of this Royal Visit to Scotland in a picture. Scotland, who seems to have forgotten her old Stuart sympathies, was boiling over with enthusiasm at the thought of beholding "the first gentleman of Europe." He was the first Brunswick who had ever landed on her shores with peaceful intentions, and her welcome, let us hope, was given to the monarch, and not to the man. Wilkie was presented at the Edinburgh levée; he writes to his sister:—

"My Dear Sister,

"As I have my court dress here, I was particularly desirous of presentation at the levée, and Sir Walter Scott recommended me to go and to make use of his name on my presentation card. * * * On being presented to the King, my name was read from my presentation card by Lord Glenlyon, and I approached His Majesty, half kneeling on my right knee, when the King held out his hand, which I put in the usual form near to my lips, then rose and bowed to his Majesty. At first the King did not appear to recognize me, but on hearing my name he looked at me, gave a sudden smile, and said, 'How d'ye do?' Upon which I bowed very low, and passed on with the rest out of the room.

"D. W."

Wilkie was a little uncertain as to what particular incident of the Royal visit he should choose for his picture: the Landing of the King at the moment when he first set foot on Scottish ground, the Visit to the Castle, the King bestowing Alms in the High Church, and the Entrance into the Palace of Holyrood, all presented pictorial advantages. The third of these subjects, however, would, it appears, have been the one fixed on by Wilkie but for the

very sufficient reason of its not occurring. Wilkie was duly stationed in the kirk to behold the royal "mite" dropped into the poor box, but, says Allan Cunningham, "some officious official, imagining that a plate 'heaped up wi' ha'pence' would be offensive in the sight of majesty, or who wished to support the royal assertion that the Scotch were a nation of gentlemen, without a mendicant among them, removed the 'Poor's Plate,' so that the King, not finding a place for depositing his alms, was constrained to send, instead of giving them, to the elders, to the chagrin of Wilkie, and the national loss of a noble picture with which he had intended to celebrate the event." Or perhaps the "officious official" may have thought that the first gentleman would prefer his left hand remaining unacquainted with the doings of his right. However that may be, the unaccomplished almsgiving could not be painted, and the King, to whom the choice of the subject of a picture was finally left, decided on the Entrance to Holyrood; a picture which, we are told, gave Wilkie much trouble in limning "so many chiefs and nobles who desired to look their loftiest."

But amidst all the splendours of the Royal Visit, Wilkie did not forget to collect materials for his John Knox, a picture which Lord Liverpool had commissioned him to paint. The old pulpit in which Knox had preached, was unearthed from out a cellar, where it had rotted in company with the gallows; and the scenes which in the Sixteenth Century had been polluted, first with the burning of the "Heretic," and secondly with the blood of the "Idolater," were now visited in the pure white daylight of religious toleration by the descendant of those fierce men to whom toleration was a crime; for the purpose of representing them in the glowing colouring of art, instead of in the dark hues of persecution and bigotry. In September, 1824, Wilkie again went to Edinburgh for the same purpose, that of collecting materials for his John Knox. During his stay the artists of Edinburgh united to give a dinner in his honour. He writes about this dinner to his sister:—

“ Edinburgh, 11th Sept. 1824.

“ My Dear Sister,

“ We had yesterday a royal feast. The artists of Edinburgh to the number of seventeen, with Mr. Nasmyth at their head, agreed to give me a dinner at the British Hotel, at which their cordiality and kindness was displayed in an eminent degree. Young Landseer was also invited, but Newton being away, was not there. We had, of course, a great many toasts and speeches, and, as in duty bound, I had to give them various *screeds*. Upon the whole, both in the eating and drinking, which was of the first style; and what with the various addresses, replies, and rejoinders, nothing could go off better. I do not know a circumstance more gratifying to me than this has been.

“ D. W.”

I wonder whether David Wilkie remembered his thirteenpenny ordinary when he sat down to this “ royal feast.” Fife also was anxious to do honour to the genius at whom it had formerly looked askance, and how can honour be better done than by a dinner? Wilkie accordingly was invited to a banquet by the provost and other dignities, and, bye-gones being forgotten, Wilkie made a speech which the “ Fife Herald ” declared was “ seldom equalled for natural and powerful eloquence.” The enthusiasm and toasts of the dinner may perhaps have exalted the “ Fife Herald’s ” admiration, but it is admitted, on better authority, that Wilkie’s speeches were generally very good.

But whilst public honours, royal favours, and artists’ welcomes were being showered upon him, trouble and sorrow and sickness were also nigh at hand. Before the intended term of this visit to Scotland was over, Wilkie was summoned back to London by the news of his mother’s illness, and arrived too late to see her alive. Her health had been for a long time gradually failing, and she at last went home without even waiting to say farewell to

her beloved son. Her death had most probably been hastened by the return of her elder son James from Canada with ruined prospects and shattered health. This melancholy return of his brother James, Wilkie has been known to say, "was the foremost of a series of misfortunes, which, like a train of crows, came one by one at first, then pair after pair, alighting in succession on his house, till the whole roof was darkened with them." Before the year closed, James Wilkie had followed his mother to the grave, leaving a widow and children almost entirely dependent upon his brother David for their support. The new year, 1825, opened only to bring with it new sorrow. It had scarcely begun when Wilkie received the news of the death of his eldest brother, John, in India, which had occurred in the preceding August, during a long march with his regiment. He also left a widow and six children. His sister Helen, a happy and expectant bride, was fated to see the man she loved die by her side on the day before that on which they were to have been united. Whilst, added to all these griefs, came severe money embarrassments, occasioned principally by the commercial rottenness of the times, but partly also by the obligations which Wilkie had entered into for his brother James, who seems to have left his affairs in the direst state of confusion.

It is not to be wondered at that, with this heavy load of misery, Wilkie's health, never strong, utterly broke down. From henceforth, indeed, his life was that of an invalid, going from place to place, consulting one physician after another, trying endless remedies,—but all in vain. In the summer of 1825, after a short stay at Cheltenham, which had done him no good, Wilkie again went to Paris: for all his physicians, though unable to arrive at the nature of his complaint, seem to have recommended change of air and scene. He arrived at Paris on the 25th of July, with a heart much heavier than when he had last visited the gay capital, and taught his landlady "Peter Piper." He must have found Paris almost as much changed as he himself was. Still less able than he was formerly to run up the steps of the

Louvre à la Haydon, his time seems principally to have been spent within doors. Many distinguished people, however, called upon him, and the attentions paid him by men of genius during this visit "were ever remembered by him with pleasure." Besides the celebrated foreigners who offered him attentions, Wilkie had a great many English friends, who gathered round him. But neither vivacious French society, nor English friendship, nor vegetable diet, nor leeches on the feet, did any good. Not even the entertaining Talma, of whom Wilkie writes: "I have seldom been more pleased with any man than with him;" nor the constant care and watchfulness of his young cousin, David Lister, who was his doctor and companion during the greater part of his sojourn abroad, could cure his disease, and, after a month or two spent in Paris, Wilkie turned his face and heart towards Italy, the land of invalids' hopes and artists' joys.

"After passing a most pleasant time for four weeks at Florence," David Wilkie and his friends Phillips and Hilton, both artists, set out for Rome, arriving there on the 20th Nov. 1825.

One wonders whether Wilkie said "re-al-ly!" on first beholding the Eternal City. Surely he could not have resisted his customary mode of address, even to the unthroned mistress of the world. Callcott used to tell an amusing story relating to Wilkie's habit of saying "re-al-ly." He said to him one day, "Wilkie, do you know that every one complains of your continual 're-al-ly?'" Wilkie mused a moment, looked up at Callcott, and drawled out, "Do they, re-al-ly?" "You must leave it off." "I will, re-al-ly." "For heaven's sake, don't keep repeating it. It annoys me." "Re-al-ly!" said Wilkie, in the most provokingly simple and unconscious tone.

Wilkie's residence in Rome, if it did not bring health to his body, at all events interested and occupied his mind. His letters to his friends in England are very interesting, and, together with the opinions he records in his journal of the numerous marvels of art with which he became acquainted whilst abroad, are well worth perusal. They may all be found in

Allan Cunningham's comprehensive biography; and although in the present day most people claim to be as well acquainted with Raphael and Michael Angelo as they are with Leech and Tenniel, still a great man's criticisms and remarks on these mighty men of old cannot fail to be instructive, even if his views differ from those of more modern critics; perhaps, indeed, we may find them instructive by virtue of this very difference, for we are all too apt to accept the latest critical dogmatism for our guidance in matters of art. Phillips and Hilton were Wilkie's constant companions whilst visiting the art treasures of Italy; and "numerous and earnest were the friendly controversies" the three artists held on the marvels and beauties they beheld. Discussions on the "general tone of shade," or whether warm or cold colours should be used for the front groups, &c. &c. But Wilkie's time was not entirely taken up by the old masters whilst at Rome. The gaiety of the Carnival overcame the severity of the grand "St. Michael," and Wilkie, escaped from the Sistine Chapel, disports himself at a masked ball, in a black velvet Vandyke dress with "slashes and lining of red silk," with a "handsome collar trimmed with lace," made, he confesses, for him by a lady, a splendid star of jewels on his breast and a Turkish sash round his waist, which I am not surprised to learn, "wrought wonders." No wonder his friends did not recognize the poor Scotch painter who had lately been subjected to leeches on the feet, and who was still undergoing the most varied medical "experiments." But the Carnival was soon over, and poor Wilkie's little outburst of fun very soon subsided. A new misfortune, indeed, added itself to the already overpowering weight of woe whilst Wilkie was at Rome. This was the failure of Messrs. Hurst and Robinson the printsellers, who owed him a large sum at the time, on which he had relied to meet his expenses whilst unable to continue work. Still, however, Wilkie never indulges in gloomy despair. "With health," he writes to his brother, "I could surmount everything; and feeling strongly, as I do, what I said to you in my last, that it is

in health alone I can be either better or worse, I really must say that I am less affected by this new threatening disaster, (viz. the failure of Hurst and Robinson) than with any former one by which we have been afflicted;" and again, in the same letter, he says: "In all these difficulties I feel no want of resource in my own mind. With anything like returning health, I can contest the whole of them inch by inch."

From Rome Wilkie proceeds to Naples, and is much interested in passing through the wild country where Salvator Rosa is said to have studied. In visiting Herculaneum and Pompeii, he is particularly struck by the "Sculptural" character of the Greek paintings. "They are," he says, "little more than coloured bas-reliefs." He alludes to this peculiarity in a letter to the celebrated sculptor, Francis Chantrey. The letter is commenced in the

" Crater of Mount Vesuvius.

" Dear Chantrey,

8th March, 1826.

" This is an odd place to begin and date a letter from, and it is only to such an odd person as yourself such a letter can with propriety be addressed; but from Vesuvius to Herculaneum, from Herculaneum to Sculpture, and from Sculpture to Chantrey, the transitions are obvious; and in poring over the treasures of ancient art which the lava has spared and preserved to us, I have not unfrequently been led to revert to those which your chisel and hammer have in our day produced." (This is all he writes in the crater, but he finishes the letter at Rome, on the 19th, and says): "I suppose you consider Greek sculpture as preferable to all other. It seems to me as if the artists in that time began as you did, first to learn to paint, and then to work in marble."

In April, 1826, Wilkie again leaves Rome, and passing through Bologna, Parma, Padua, takes up his abode for a short time at Venice. He expresses

enthusiastic admiration for the "Correggios" at Parma, and says that the "Magdalen" in particular, "for character, colour and expression, is the perfection, not only of Correggio, but of painting." At Venice his favourite picture seems to have been the "St. Pietro Martire" of Titian. He visited it in all lights, with the sun shining on it, and in dim twilight, and says that the impression it produced was one "of awe and terror." For Tintoretto he expresses none of Mr. Ruskin's rapturous admiration; but, on the contrary, is disappointed by his "Crucifixion," and considers his "Paradise" "a huge mass of confusion." But, alas! even in Venice, the City of Enchantment, no spell cast by its beauty can make him forget the ugly reality of his affairs in London. "When I see the Rialto and the Doge's Palace," he writes, "I am more apt to picture to myself the lively scenes that Shakespeare has drawn of Antonio, with the pound of flesh and the *forfeited bond*, than to think of what these should alone suggest—the pictures of Canaletti and of Titian." The *forfeited bond* is the debt to the Ordnance, for which he was his brother's security, and which still hangs like a thick black cloud over his head, a cloud which medicine is not likely to be able to disperse, although Wilkie, as a last resource, seems fondly to hope that "mercury may do it."

From Venice Wilkie travelled to Munich, where he obtained permission to see his own picture the "Reading of the Will," which, it will be remembered, the King of Bavaria had bought. But the art-loving monarch was now dead, and his pictures, it was said, would soon be sold to the highest bidder. His private apartments, where Wilkie's picture was, were shut up and seals placed on the doors, and it was a long time, and only by great favour, that Wilkie obtained entrance. The whole scene indeed at the Palace of Munich formed at the time of Wilkie's arrival a somewhat curious commentary on the subject of his picture. He was pleased to find that it looked "remarkably in harmony," with the Dutch masters by whom it was surrounded, and that, if sold with them, "looked as if it

would bear as good a price." With the Dresden Gallery Wilkie does not seem to have been at all delighted. "After the trim and well-arranged Gallery of Munich," he says, in a letter to Phillips, "it looks rubbishy and neglected." He admits, however, that the "Notte" of Correggio is not less "than an Archangel ruined."

Whilst at Dresden, Wilkie is induced to try another experiment in his search after health. This is to take the German waters. He accordingly proceeds to Töplitz and Carlsbad for this purpose. But "simple hot water" has no effect whatever; and Sir James Clark, who was his physician in Rome, and whom he accidentally meets again at Töplitz, decides that he shall go to Italy for another winter. In the multitude of councillors there may be safety, but in the multitude of doctors there certainly is not health.

At Carlsbad, Wilkie tells his sister, "Scotland is looked upon as a land of romance and poetry, and the Waverley Novels are as familiar to all classes as with us." Among Germans, Russians, and Poles, he says, "it is at once an introduction to their confidence to find that one has seen and conversed with Sir Walter Scott."

From Carlsbad to Prague, from Prague to Vienna, from Vienna, where he has the honour of dining with Prince Metternich "*en famille*," back to Venice, from Venice to Florence, and thence to Rome, where he is warmly welcomed back by all the artists there congregated.

On Christmas Day he partakes of "a grand dinner given by young Severn at his studio to a party, all artists, eleven in number." A Scotch dish had been determined on at this dinner in honour of Wilkie, and a veritable "haggis" made its appearance, "a true chieftain in imperial Rome!" "He was soon operated upon," continues Wilkie, "and was left in a state that to an Italian eye must have looked very like as if we had dined off the bagpipe of a pifferara. Never did merry Christmas have a more happy celebration. All the party were artists, and although apparently

a private dinner, it has been hinted that it was somewhat joint, that they might pay me a compliment."

But this genial Christmas dinner was only a foretaste of a greater honour of the same kind which was awaiting him. On the 16th of January, 1827, a public dinner was given to Wilkie by the Scotch artists and amateurs then at Rome. The Duke of Hamilton took the chair, and Sir Robert Liston, an old friend, who happened to arrive in Rome a day or so before the dinner, was one of the guests. Many distinguished foreigners were also present, amongst whom the name of Thorwaldsen has perhaps the greatest interest. Altogether, the compliment to Wilkie was perhaps the highest that could have been paid him. Royalty had certainly said, "How d'ye do?" at a levée before now, but this was a recognition of his genius by men who were capable of understanding it. "But," says Wilkie, sadly enough, "if this expression of national feeling be thought a triumph, which I do not think it is, yet no one need envy me,—it is the afflicted state they find me in that has called it forth; and those who know the world need not think it any piece of good fortune to be too much the object of sympathy to one's brother artists and to one's countrymen."

One more sorrow, the death of his earliest admirer and most constant friend, Sir George Beaumont, came to Wilkie whilst at Rome, and then at last the dark night in which he had so long wandered began to show signs of returning day. During the summer of 1827, which he spent at Geneva, he was sufficiently restored to health (apparently from having left off taking remedies and consulting doctors) to be able to paint a picture, that of the "Princess Doria Washing the Pilgrim's Feet," a continuous effort to which he had been hitherto unequal. This return of the power of continuous attention, the loss of which had been one of the chief symptoms of his disease, renewed his hopes; and "*accounts*" in London becoming "clearer and more satisfactory," he is now able to go on, he says, "without anxiety; enough for travelling and home expenses, and enough to go on with the

engravings, all come by fairly in the way of business." No help, indeed, except "in the way of business," would Wilkie accept from any of his friends. It was, however, supposed that he would not refuse assistance extended to him either by his country or his sovereign; but I cannot find that his country was ever made aware of his wants, and the noble patron of art on the throne could think of no better mode of supporting it, than by helping Wilkie to pay his doctor's bills whilst he was ill, under an agreement that he should be repaid in pictures when he got better. This kindness Wilkie meekly refused, and by his own unaided exertions achieved independence.

But the prospect of better health and brighter times did not at once bring Wilkie back to London. The doctors had advised him to stay three years abroad, and, independently of this, he was loth to return home without having seen the triumphs of Spanish art in its native abode. To Spain, therefore, he next turned his steps. This journey to Spain was fraught with great importance, for it confirmed Wilkie in a purpose he had long been meditating, namely, a change of style. Three or four small pictures, accomplished during the latter part of the last winter in Rome, and the "Princess Doria Washing the Pilgrim's Feet," were indeed painted in his *new style*, but this style does not seem to have been *un fait accompli*, until after he had seen Titian, Velasquez, and Murillo, in Spain.

We have already seen him studying Titian's magic colouring at Venice, and visiting the "S. Pietro Martire" in all lights, and I cannot help thinking that "the glorious Titian in this his last stronghold," i.e. in Madrid, had more effect on Wilkie's mind, and consequently on his style, than any other painter. I venture this opinion with much humility, for I am aware that the totally different mode of painting which Wilkie now adopted has been mostly attributed to the influence of Rembrandt, Correggio, and above all, Velasquez. "The spiritual Velasquez," as he calls him, he certainly admired and studied deeply, but he says emphatically, "Titian seems his

model;" and it appears, judging from various remarks in his journal and letters, that he considered this the highest praise that he could bestow upon him. Ill-health had doubtless much to do with Wilkie's change of style; he could no longer afford to bestow a year's labour on one picture, nor to paint with that admirable truth of detail, which not being "sought for its own sake," but "referred always to a great end," had given such inestimable value to his earlier works; but still it does not follow that ill-health alone was the cause of the change, as Leslie seems to imagine. It seems more probable that such a modest man as Wilkie, who never thought himself an original genius, should have been led, on seeing the great colourists of the world, to perceive his own deficiency in this respect, and forgetting, as many other great men have at times done, that his strength lay in his own inherent individuality, should strive to imitate their excellences rather than discover new though lesser truths for himself.

Although posterity has failed to agree with him, Wilkie himself reckoned that the seven months and ten days which he passed in Spain "were the best employed time of his professional life." During this period he painted four pictures, of which the most celebrated are, "The Maid of Saragossa" and "The Guerilla Council of War." "Spain," he says, "is the unpoached game-preserve of Europe, in which I have had six months' freedom to myself alone." And again: "For what I have seen I may almost be the envy of every British artist; and from what I have been doing, weak as I am, I have again the happiness to say with the great Correggio, though on a far more humble occasion, 'Anch' io sono pittore.'"

Few English artists had penetrated to Madrid at the time of Wilkie's visit; but although there was no fraternity of painters to give dinners as in Rome, Wilkie found a most charming friend and companion in Washington Irving, who was at that time an attaché of the American embassy at Madrid. After a tour in Granada, Washington Irving again met Wilkie at Seville, where, says Wilkie, "he amused us much by relating, in his agreeable way,

the adventures of himself and his companions." Washington Irving's "Tour in Granada" has since been published, but it must have been much pleasanter to have heard it in "his agreeable way," whilst its adventures were still fresh in his mind. "We are much together," adds Wilkie; "we can sympathize in each other's pursuits, and discourse in the same tongue about art and literature."

Wilkie left Madrid in the middle of May, 1828, and before the end of June he was once more in London, after an absence of three years, spent in search after health, art, and, most arduous quest of all, peace of mind.

June 27, "Went to Lord Grosvenor's," writes Haydon, "where I met Wilkie, after an absence of three years. He was thinner, and seemed more nervous than ever. His keen and bushy brow looked irritable, eager, nervous, and full of genius. How interesting it was to meet him at Lord Grosvenor's, where we have all assembled these twenty years, under every variety of fortune! Poor Sir George is gone, who used to form one of the group, Wilkie, Seguiet, Jackson, and I, are left. Lord Mulgrave is ill." Again, on the 22nd of July, he writes, "Had a very pleasant two hours with Wilkie, looking over his Spanish pictures, and had one of our usual discussions about art. Now it is all Spanish and Italian art. He thinks nothing of his early and beautiful efforts—his 'Rent Day,' his 'Fiddler,' his 'Politicians.' 'They are not carried far enough;' as if anything on earth in point of expression and story was ever carried further." It is pleasant to find that the two friends are drawing near to each other again, for they had been long separated, not alone by absence, but by the wider gulf of wrong and misunderstanding. In spite of their different natures, however, they had been friends in youth, and the bond of that early love could not be easily torn asunder; and Wilkie would, no doubt, have sincerely returned Haydon's sentiments, when he said of him, "Master David, I think, I scent the old human nature. But, with all thy faults, I like thee still, and can nowhere find thy equal."

The fame that Wilkie had acquired in Spain, where his pictures had been visited by all the *grandees* of that nation, as well as by "every minister, secretary, or *attaché*" of the *corps diplomatique* at Madrid, had preceded him to England, and every artist and critic was on the tip-toe of expectation to see what his *new style* produced.

The exhibition of 1829 opened, and the public was gratified by the sight of eight pictures by Wilkie, the full number which a member may exhibit at one time. Four of these pictures were Italian subjects, three Spanish, and one the portrait of the Earl of Kellie, painted for the county hall of Cupar. Two of the Italian subjects, viz. "The Pifferari" and "The Princess Doria," and two of the Spanish, "The Maid of Saragossa" and "The Spanish Posado, or Guerilla Council of War," were bought by George IV. Two other Spanish pictures, "The Guerilla taking Leave of his Confessor," and "The Guerilla's Return to his Family," were also ordered by him at this time, making in the whole a series of four pictures illustrative of the war which had recently taken place in Spain. "The Maid of Saragossa" was a general favourite with the public; but critics, having formerly abused his "pauper style," now discovered that that was his great excellence, and a whole storm of criticism was poured on his new pictures.

"Wilkie," says Allan Cunningham, "endured it all with astonishing composure: he had made up his mind in the matter, for he felt that if he continued to work in his usual laborious style of detail and finish, he would never achieve independence, nor add another sprig of laurel to his wreath."

Wilkie now took up again his picture of "The King's Entrance into Holyrood," which had been left unfinished when he went abroad. This, begun in the old, Wilkie now finished in the new style, and "the mixture," says Haydon, "was like oil and water." The picture was not, perhaps, a happy effort, but then we must consider the subject! The "John Knox," which had also occupied him before he left England, was painted entirely

in the new style, and is one of the best examples. The subject was one after his own heart, and he threw his whole strength into it; still one cannot help wishing that it had been painted in the old rather than in the grand new style. The composition and the light and shade might not have been so effective, but it would probably have *meant* more had it been painted before his visit to Italy.

On the 7th of January, 1830, died Sir Thomas Lawrence, President of the Royal Academy, and George IV. immediately appointed Wilkie to one of the offices which that polite painter had filled, namely, that of Painter in Ordinary to the King. It now became a question whether he would be elected to the other vacant office—the presidency. Most of his friends thought that he would, and the King, by appointing him his Painter in Ordinary, evidently meant to intimate to the academicians that such was his wish; but notwithstanding that he was beyond doubt the greatest painter then living, it can be well supposed that he was not a suitable man to fill the office of President. His brother academicians, at all events, thought so; for Sir Martin Archer Shee had eighteen votes, whilst Wilkie had only two. Allan Cunningham says that Collins alone voted for Wilkie; but in this he is mistaken, for Mr. Leslie states, in his charming *Recollections*, that he also voted for him on this occasion; although, he says, he was afterwards glad that the majority did not think as he and Collins had done at the time of the election, as Sir Martin Shee “made an incomparable president.” Haydon, however, was furious at Wilkie being passed over, and raved at the Academy for its jealousy and injustice in electing “the most impotent painter in the solar system,” instead of the man “from whose existence an epoch in British art must be dated.” Wilkie himself does not seem to have troubled much about this vexed question; we do not, indeed, find a single allusion to it in any of his letters of this time. He seems to have gone on painting under all circumstances, except when health prevented, with quite a Sir-Joshua-like composure;

and, although he had no "trumpet to shift," he seems to have been equally deaf to all foolish and vexatious carpings, although, as we have seen, he was very pervious to friendly criticism.

Both William IV. and the Queen continued Wilkie in the office of Painter in Ordinary, which George IV. had bestowed upon him, and from this time forth his time was greatly taken up by court portraiture. In the exhibition of 1832 was exhibited a full-length portrait of William IV, as well as the "John Knox," which had been painted for Sir Robert Peel, from whom Wilkie had received many interesting letters whilst abroad, and who welcomed him with most cordial friendship on his return home. Many of Wilkie's letters are addressed to Sir Robert, whose own noble heart taught him to love the painter as well as to appreciate his art.

In the autumn of 1834, Wilkie again visited Scotland, where he undertook the commission to paint the picture of "Sir David Baird discovering the Body of Tippoo Saib." This picture was executed with an immense amount of care and thought; but although Wilkie seems to have liked the subject himself, and to have thought that it furnished "a great occasion for a work of art," it has not the characteristic Wilkie stamp which endears his pictures to Englishmen.

"Columbus" and the "First Ear-ring" were exhibited, with several portraits, in 1835, and "The Peep-o'-day Boy's Cabin," "The Duke of Wellington writing a Despatch on the Night before the Battle of Waterloo," and "Napoleon and the Pope in Conference at Fontainbleau," in 1836.

In order to paint "The Peep-o'-day Boy," Wilkie had made a short tour in Ireland, a country which, although it usually presented the artistic advantages of fierce glowing anarchy and picturesque dirt, had hitherto escaped the attention of painters. Wilkie was much struck by the foreign aspect of the Irish. He says: "The mass of the population has an Italian and Spanish look, and one is surprised that they should speak our own language." But what principally delighted the painter's mind was the

primitive nakedness of the Irish children. "They run about the cabins," he says, "unclad, realizing to a fervid imagination an age of poetry, yet which the poetry of our own time has not described, and to painting is perfectly new and untouched." And again: "The unreserved domicile of the human species with the brute creation basking round the door with the children, who are in a state of primitive innocence, sans chemise, sans culotte, sans everything, classes them higher far than subjects of common life."

"*St. James's Palace*, 16th June, 1836. The King was this day pleased to confer the honour of knighthood upon David Wilkie, Esquire, Royal Academician, Principal Painter to His Majesty, &c."—*London Gazette*. Yes, the "raw, queer Scotchman" is now knight and court painter. He also, like the brave young David of Israel, came up to London to fight with a gigantic Philistine, and having conquered the monster (with paint brush and palette instead of sling and stone), now enters into his kingdom. But alas! it has been a wearying battle, and it is not the brave young David, but a worn-out, feeble, old-looking man, who receives the reward. Sir David, however, is still the same modest and humble-minded man as was the young student at the Scotch Academy, who decided to work hard *because* he "was not a genius."

"He described his feelings," on the occasion of his knighthood, "like a child," says Haydon. Like a child he seems to have been pleased by the attention of great people; but this childish sort of delight at being noticed is very different from servility to rank, of which Wilkie has been sometimes accused. We do not find that he ever degraded himself by this, and Mr. Leslie affirms that "where his art was concerned he would never give up a point that he thought of consequence, in deference to the opinion or wishes of people of title."

A short time after the accession of her present Majesty, Wilkie was summoned to the Court (then at Brighton) to paint "The Queen's First Council." "Having been accustomed to see the Queen from a child,"

Wilkie says, "my reception had a little the air of an early acquaintance." But though the girl Queen was very gracious, poor Wilkie had "considerable plague" in adjusting the claims of her council; and in the painting of his royal commission, Allan Cunningham tells us, "the artist experienced difficulties such as genius ought never to be exposed to from the far-descended and the polite."

This picture, "The Bride at her Toilette," and several portraits, were exhibited, in 1838, in the rooms still occupied by the Royal Academy, in Trafalgar Square, to which the exhibition had been removed from its old apartments in Somerset House in 1837. Commissions now poured in upon Wilkie far quicker than he could execute them, notwithstanding the greater rapidity of his later style. He painted a great number of portraits during these latter years of his life, and I am afraid this must have been because they paid better than more complicated subjects, for they are not generally of interesting people. Two, however, must be excepted from this remark, for he painted the portraits of his friend Edward Irving, and the Irish Reformer, Daniel O'Connell.

Wilkie's reputation, indeed, was extended far beyond his own country. Ireland chose him to paint one of her patriots; Spaniards, who called him *Signior Vix* (they could never pronounce his name), delighted in his productions; Germany secured "The Reading of the Will" for £1200, just three times the sum which the King of Bavaria had first given for it, and France, in 1835, had elected him, and Raimbach the engraver, Corresponding Members of the Institute, an honour of which he might justly be proud. Frenchmen, it appears, admired Wilkie greatly: "I like your *Vilkes*, but I don't like your *Vest*," said a Frenchman once to Leslie, and engravings from "Vilkes" pictures have, it is said, always been popular in France.

In 1837, Wilkie moved from Phillimore Place to Vicarage Place, Kensington, where, besides other painting rooms, he was soon obliged to turn the laundry into "a beau-ideal of a studio." This beau-ideal of a studio

was not destined to behold much work accomplished in it. It was not finished until 1839, and then David Wilkie's working time was drawing to a close. In the autumn of 1839 he went once more, and for the last time to Scotland. The principal object of this visit was to collect material for a picture of "John Knox administering the Sacrament at Calder House," and he appears to have taken great pains to get up some historical information regarding this subject, one, no doubt, which he would have effectively represented had he lived to paint it. His sketch for it was bought by the Scottish Academy for £84 at the sale of his works, which took place after his death.

In 1840, Wilkie had again eight pictures on the walls of the Academy, of which number "Benvenuto Cellini and Pope Paul III." was, perhaps, the most interesting. From 1806, when he exhibited his "Village Politicians," at the age of twenty-one, until 1840, when he was fifty-five, Wilkie had been (except whilst he was abroad) an almost constant exhibitor at the Royal Academy. For thirty-four years he had charmed and taught London society, but before the next exhibition was closed, his life-star had set on this earth's horizon.

In the autumn of 1840, in the fading evening of his life, Wilkie turned his face towards the east, the glowing morning land, where the past seems still a vivid present. More especially did he desire to visit Judea, and make at Bethlehem some sketch of a young mother and child; but whether art was his sole aim in this journey, or whether he undertook it also with the hope of gaining better health, no one seems to have known. He was not, however, Allan Cunningham states, "encumbered with royal commissions," as some people had supposed, but went entirely for his own personal gratification.

Journeying with his friend Mr. Woodburn, an experienced traveller, through Holland and Germany, and visiting all the picture galleries on the way, Wilkie, on the 1st of October, landed for about an hour at Rustchuk,

whilst the Danube steamer took in coals. This, "the first town, city, or village of the Moslem Empire, exceeded in wonder all I had seen before," writes Wilkie; "but," he adds, "it was greatly the wonder of disappointment, that the domicile of the Turk should be so inferior to the splendour of his attire." Even when he arrives at Constantinople his impression remains the same. "Nothing clean or tidy, all bustle, hurry, and business; yet no appearance of wealth, all living as if from hand to mouth, with dresses splendid and dwellings wretched, still recalling, in all their doings, a race and a time from which civilization had sprung." He was detained several months at Constantinople in consequence of the war in Syria, and made a great many sketches, as well as painted a portrait of the young Sultan during his stay. Turkey offered most gorgeous attractions to an artist, but Wilkie was anxious to reach the Holy Land, and in spite of the brilliant scenes of the Moslem city, the Crescent had no such associations as those which made him a pilgrim to Jerusalem.

Whilst he was at Constantinople the news arrived there of the fall of Acre, which, he writes, "spread like wildfire, gladdening every one, Turk, Jew, and Christian, and even exciting the young Sultan to a kind of frenzy of joy." He and Woodburn, not to be behind in the universal hilarity, gave "a royal feast" in honour of the event, and "the resounding cadences of 'The Good Old English Gentleman'" kept Wilkie awake on this occasion long after he had retired to rest in the capital of the Moslem Empire. The Sultan, when his portrait was completed, presented Wilkie with a gold snuff-box set with diamonds, and ordered a copy of the portrait (the original being intended for Queen Victoria), and then, with every mark of Moslem favour, with the regrets of the English inhabitants of Constantinople, and with the tears of his Greek landlady, Wilkie set sail, on the 12th of January, 1841, for Smyrna, on his way to Palestine.

"When Wilkie set foot on the Holy Land," says his biographer, "it was with the spiritual feelings of one familiar with his Bible from his youth, one

on the eve of realizing the pilgrim's wish of a long life, and about to people the hills and vales and streams of Judea with the fine creations of his own fancy, and the rich embodiments of scriptural story." When asked by his friend Collins "if he had any guide-book with him for the journey?" he replied, "Yes, and the very best;" and produced from his travelling-box a pocket-bible. "I never saw him again," adds Collins, "but the Bible throughout Judea was, I am assured, his best and only guide-book." Throughout life might, indeed, be as truly said as throughout Judea; for although Wilkie does not, like Haydon, record his readings therein in his Journal, his upright character and earnest endeavour to do his duty towards his fellow-men, prove that he must have gained more practical guidance from it than his mistaken and unhappy friend.

"After a journey of six months and twelve days," writes Wilkie in his Journal on the 27th of February, 1841, "we have at last reached the most interesting city in the world—Jerusalem. This struck me" (on beholding it from the heights) "as unlike all other cities; it recalled the imaginations of Nicholas Poussin; a city not for every day, not for the present, but for all time—as if built for an eternal sabbath." Wilkie wrote a great many interesting letters to his friends and brother-artists during his stay in Jerusalem, expressing in all of them the great interest he felt in the scenes by which he was surrounded, and especially how important he thought it that these sacred places should be known to the artist with a view of giving greater and more impressive truth to representations of Bible History. To Sir Robert Peel he writes the following words, the truth of which has been most strikingly exemplified within the last few years.

"It is a fancy or belief that the art of our time and of our British people may reap some benefit that has induced me to undertake this journey. It is to see, to inquire, and to judge, not whether I can, but whether those who are younger, or with far higher attainments and powers, may not in future be required, in the advance and spread of our knowledge, to refer at

once to the localities of Scripture events, when the great work is to be essayed of representing Scripture History. Great as the assistance, I might say the inspiration, which the art of painting has derived from the illustration of Christianity, and great as the talent and genius have been, this high walk of art has called into being, yet it is remarkable that none of the great painters to whom the world has hitherto looked for the visible appearance of Scripture scenes and feelings, have ever visited the Holy Land." The great Venetian painters, he goes on to say, were enabled, by their intercourse with the Levant, to give to their work an Eastern character, but even such minds as Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci might, he considered, have derived help had they studied in the Land of Moses. "The time, however," he concludes, "is now come when our supply in this walk of art must be drawn from the fountain-head. The facility of travelling, as well as recent public events, favour our pursuits in this sacred quarter; and I am highly grateful at being permitted to see, with my own natural eyes, what Jerusalem in our day can still present to us."

It was reserved for one of the greatest painters of modern times, Mr. Holman Hunt, to realize Wilkie's ardent desire in a more glorious manner than he could ever even have dared to dream. His "Christ in the Temple" has just the truth of circumstance and detail which Wilkie felt was wanting in the great painters of Italy.

On the 7th of April, Wilkie left Jerusalem, and after a somewhat dangerous passage from Jaffa, arrived at Alexandria on the 26th, on his way back to England. Here he was detained for about three weeks, waiting for the Oriental steamer. During this time, however, he was not allowed to be idle, for the renowned Pacha, Mehemet Ali, requested him to take his portrait and gave him four long sittings for that purpose. This picture must have been the last work which Sir David Wilkie was engaged upon, for it occupied him until the time came for leaving Alexandria. He was to finish it in England, have it framed, and then send it back to his

highness. So disposed the Pacha, but the portrait was destined to arrive in England without the painter.

On the 26th of May, Wilkie wrote most cheerfully to his sister from on board the Oriental steamer, sending off the letter by way of Malta and Marseilles, in order that it might reach London a few days before his own anticipated arrival. On the 27th he again recorded in his Journal his desire that the illustrators and commentators on Scripture "should be acquainted with the country whose history and aspect they profess to teach." These were the last words he wrote. He had been slightly ill whilst the ship was at Malta, but on the evening of the 31st of May he appeared on deck as usual, and seemed to have shaken off his ailments; but when the ship surgeon went to visit him in his cabin on the following morning, he found that his speech was incoherent and his pulse rapid. Various remedies were tried, but, says the surgeon, "he continued gradually sinking until about eleven o'clock, when he expired without a struggle." June 1st, 1841. The ship, which was in Gibraltar Bay at the time of his death, immediately put back to the town, but the authorities refused to allow the body to be landed, on account of quarantine regulations. So the ship's carpenter made a coffin, and at half-past eight in the evening, as the log-book of the steamer records, the engines were stopped, and the body which had held David Wilkie was committed to the deep. His work on this earth was over and his spirit had gone to its own place in God's universe.

The news of Wilkie's death caused grief throughout all England, for he was the favourite painter of the people as well as of the court. The Council of the Academy wrote a letter of condolence to his brother and sister, which was signed by 225 artists, and Sir Robert Peel presided at a meeting which voted a statue in his honour.

Haydon appears to have been sincerely and deeply affected by his loss,

and for many months afterwards his journal shows that his thoughts dwelt constantly on his friend. He dreamt of him, and awoke, exclaiming, "Poor Wilkie." He "read prayers and prayed for his soul;" he "wrote to Sir Robert Peel to relieve his thoughts," and "heard his voice fifty times a day;" and although even his dreams express the same egotistical character as his waking thoughts, he doubtless mourned for his dear old companion with true sorrow of heart. One entry in his diary concerning Wilkie's death is too characteristic to be passed over. He writes, 18th June: "My only regret is the thirty-nine Academicians were not flung" (into the sea) "after him, as they ought to have been, on the ancient principle of sacrificing to the manes of a distinguished man!" Poor Haydon! His "glorious triumphs" are mostly forgotten now, and his bitter remarks no longer leave an unpleasant flavour in men's mouths. He and his friend may now have met, as he so fervently desired, "cleansed of all earthly frailties, never to separate more." Yes; and reconciled, may-be, to the unappreciative Forty, and even, let us hope, to "the most impotent painter in the solar system."

"The recollections of all my intercourse with Wilkie," writes Leslie,¹ "and I knew him for about twenty years, are altogether delightful. I had no reason ever to alter the opinion I first formed of him, that he was a truly great artist and a truly good man. The little peculiarities of his character, as they all arose from the best intentions, rather endeared him to his friends than otherwise. He was a modest man, and had no wish to attract attention by eccentricity; and indeed all his oddity, and he was in many things very odd, arose from an extreme desire to be exactly like other people. Naturally shy and reserved, he forced himself to talk. I can easily conceive, from what I knew of him, that he had a great repugnance to making speeches at dinners or public meetings; yet, knowing that from the station he had acquired he must do such things, he made public speaking a study.

¹ Leslie's Recollections, vol. i. page 173.

He carried the same desire of being correct into lesser things, not from vanity, but from a respect for society, for he considered that genius did not give a man a right to be negligent in his manners even in trifles. When quadrilles were introduced, Wilkie set himself diligently to study them, and drew ground plans and elevations of the new dances to aid him in remembering the figures. He was always ceremonious, but, as I have said, from modesty, and not from pride or affectation, for no man had less of either."

Such was the man, in his strength and in his weakness; a man of whom a friend of twenty years' standing was able to write, "He was a truly great artist, and a truly good man."






PHOTOGRAPHS FROM ENGRAVINGS OF TWENTY-SIX OF
THE MOST IMPORTANT PAINTINGS OF
SIR DAVID WILKIE.




THE VILLAGE RECRUIT.

 HIS Picture is said to have been one of those works which Wilkie brought up when he first came to London, and exhibited in a shop window at Charing Cross. A well-known art-critic told Allan Cunningham that a wealthy friend came to him one morning, and said, "I have seen what I think a very clever little picture, for six pounds, in a shop window at Charing Cross. It is painted by one Wilkie, but I am afraid to buy it." "Oh, buy it by all means," said the critic, "it cannot be altogether bad if you admire it: risk six pounds on your own taste." The dubious Cræsus returned to the window where he had seen the "clever little picture," (supposed to have been "The Village Recruit"), having made up his mind to venture his six pounds; but he was too late; some one, who had no connoisseur-friend to refer to, had in the meanwhile bought the picture.

"The Village Recruit" was painted soon after the "Pitlessie Fair," whilst Wilkie was living at the Manse of Cults, after his return from the Scotch Academy. It was most likely accomplished on his chest-of-drawers easel, and the scene it depicts had no doubt been often witnessed by the young artist. It was indeed a too frequent one during the French wars. The picture tells its own tale. The love-crossed Recruit looks very dismal over the brilliant prospect the serjeants have held out to him, of having glory for his bride, and is only waiting for the cork to be drawn from a bottle, which apparently the old fellow next to him finds some difficulty in effecting, to drown his sorrows and his hopes together in one long Lethean draught. The gaping rustics listening to the soldiers' tales, and the old man by the fire, who is somewhat doubtful of their truth, even the limping dog who sniffs suspiciously at the strangers, are all characteristic and expressive of the artist's truth of observation.




THE VILLAGE POLITICIANS.

IR GEORGE BEAUMONT, it is related, had by some means become the owner of Hogarth's mahl-stick. He kept it, he said, until he should find some painter worthy of possessing it, and, on seeing "The Village Politicians," he immediately presented it to Wilkie. This picture was the "open sesame" to the cave where Fame had hitherto hid herself from Wilkie's grasp. Sir George Beaumont and Lord Mulgrave, at Jackson's kind instigation, went to see the picture at Wilkie's lodgings before it was quite finished, and were both so delighted with it that they each gave him a commission on the spot. The magic words of praise which the great Sir George had pronounced were caught up by the London world; and when the picture was exhibited in the Academy of 1806, there was such a crowd round it on the first day, that "there was no getting in sideways or edgeways." "It is jest wonderful" were the words in which Wilkie expressed his thoughts concerning his sudden notoriety. "The Village Politicians" was bought by Lord Mansfield for thirty guineas.



THE BLIND FIDDLER.

HE Blind Fiddler" was the picture which Wilkie painted in fulfilment of the commission which Sir George Beaumont gave him on his first visit to his studio. "Our artist is always the better for being national," says Leslie; and this picture, which is one of Wilkie's most beautiful productions, is essentially national, although the subject is one which touches all hearts and can be felt by every nation. The picture is so well known that any description of it must be thoroughly unnecessary. It was exhibited in 1807, and is now in the South Kensington Museum. It has been considered by critics to be too grey and cold in tone, and Sir George Beaumont alludes to this defect when he writes to Wilkie, "'Save me from myself' is as rational a petition in painting as in morals: some peculiar colour is always striving to get the better of the artist, and requires all his vigilance to oppose. I have endeavoured to detect something in you of this kind, that I might mention it as a warning. I perceive or think I perceive a tendency to—what shall I call it?—a metallic appearance in some parts of the drapery of the woman with the child, particularly about the apron, and the head dress of the child. These appearances are so slight that I almost doubted whether I should mention them, but, on consideration, I thought I should ill act the part of a friend if I did not warn you in time."

The picture must indeed be great in which there is nothing to criticise but the "metallic" tone of an apron.



ALFRED IN THE NEAT-HERD'S COTTAGE.


THIS Picture was a commission from Mr. Alexander Davison, who was desirous that Wilkie should contribute to a collection of pictures he was forming of subjects from English history. The choice of the particular scene to be represented was left to Wilkie's own judgment, and he selected the well-known tradition which makes the peasant-disguised Saxon King burn the cakes committed to his care. This subject, though perhaps the least ambitious of any that he could have chosen, was still fraught with much difficulty, for it was necessary to give an elevated and historical character to it, which he felt would be "no easy matter where the symbols of greatness were wanting."

"With the old woman," writes Sir George Beaumont to him, "I am perfectly satisfied, but Alfred, the handsome and agreeable, is rather insipid—I mean only as to his countenance. What I wish to submit to your consideration is this, whether it would be amiss to infuse into his countenance surprise, with a slight mixture of indignation, at the sudden and indecorous attack of the old lady. This would relieve you from the almost impossible task which should express meekness and power at the same time."

Wilkie was "very sensible of the honour" of his historical commission, which trusted his powers in a line in which he had not hitherto used them. Whether he succeeded in it, or not, critics have not quite decided, so every one is at liberty to judge for himself. The dog stealing the cake during the dispute is a natural touch.



THE RENT DAY.

HE Rent Day" was painted in fulfilment of the commission given by Wilkie's kind and constant friend Lord Mulgrave, on his first visit to his studio. It forms one of a noble series of national pictures, which it is Wilkie's chief glory to have painted, and which will teach our grand-children and great-grand-children more of the manners and habits of their fathers than any dry-as-dust histories.


Such paintings as this are truly historical pictures. The giant-painters of old painted what they saw around them, and so their pictures have a real meaning and historic worth to us.

"Wilkie was an historical painter," says Ruskin, "and Chantrey an historical sculptor, because they painted or carved the veritable men and things they saw, not men and things as they believed they might have been or should have been. But no one tells such men they are historical painters, and they are discontented with what they do; and poor Wilkie must needs travel to see the Grand School, and imitate the Grand School, and ruin himself."

"The Rent Day" was thought out whilst Wilkie lay on a sick bed at Cults, and was exhibited in 1808. He received £150 for it.




THE CARD - PLAYERS.

 HIS Picture was painted for the Duke of Gloucester, and the subject, it is said, was suggested by him. It was the first royal commission which Wilkie received, and it is pleasant to learn that his Royal Highness added a hundred pounds to the original fifty which he had agreed to pay Wilkie for the painting.

The evident uneasiness of mind of the man who is sitting with his back to the spectator is rendered in a most expressive manner. Although his countenance is not seen, one feels that he is perplexed and undecided what card to play. He has probably forgotten how many trumps are out. Even the uncomfortable position of his feet beneath his chair, betrays his uncomfortable state of feeling, in contradistinction to his firm old partner, who endures defeat without change of countenance, and plants his feet steadily on the ground.



THE SICK LADY.

HE picture of "The Sick Lady," Allan Cunningham says, was "the offspring of long study and of frequent retouching and amendment;" yet it is not such a happy effort as many of Wilkie's earlier pictures. The scene, however, is natural and touching, and the unmoved expression of the cautious Scotch doctor, as he counts the sick girl's pulse, is well rendered. The mother looks with fierce anxiety into his face, endeavouring to read his verdict, but can learn nothing there from which to gather either hope or despair; the father comes forward from the Bible he has been reading, and waits to be told whether the resignation he has been seeking will be put to the trial; even the little dog looks up to the man on whose word hangs the happiness of a household. Only the poor sick daughter herself seems indifferent to his decree. She lies between life and death in a languor which even the doctor's visit cannot disturb.

This picture was painted in 1809, and was bought, by the Marquis of Lansdowne, for £150.



THE CUT FINGER.



WILKIE'S Journal. "Oct. 7, 1808. Came home and commenced my sketch of 'The Cut Finger.'"

"8th. Began to paint and put in most part of the sketch of 'The Cut Finger.'"

"11th. Began to complete my sketch, which occupied me until four o'clock."

"13th. Commenced the picture of 'The Cut Finger,' was interrupted a whole hour by G., who bothered me about his ground and colours."

"17th. Walked out to try and find a model for my picture, and had the good fortune to find one before I had gone the length of the street: at 12 the model came, and I began to paint from her the head of the old woman."

"19th. Began to paint at 11, and finished the old woman's cap and made a drawing of one of her hands." (Similar entries all through November).

"Dec. 5th. Painted from 10 till 4, and put in the small ship on the chair, and finished the floor, two small pieces of wood upon it. Haydon approved of the pewter basin very much."

"27th. Put in a piece of curtain hanging on the chimney piece, over the tallest girl's head, which has improved the picture very much. I propose making the ground darker, particularly the stock."

"19th. Painted at the things on the chimney-piece."

"23rd. Painted at 'The Cut Finger,' but as I was not satisfied with what I was doing, I took a walk."

"26th. Got over the tallest girl's petticoat."

Not until the 22nd of March, 1809, is the picture "taken to Mr. Whitbread, who seemed to like it well."


We may see by these entries what is meant by painting a picture. Scarcely a day passed, during the five months that Wilkie was occupied about this, without his adding some touch to it.

It was exhibited with "The Rent Day," in 1809; but even after the Exhibition, Wilkie "put some touches in 'The Cut Finger,' to mend a scratch it had received during the Exhibition."

Sold, for 50 guineas, to Samuel Whitbread, Esq.



THE VILLAGE FESTIVAL.

HAT "The Village Festival," or, as it was first called, "The Ale-house Door," gave Wilkie considerable trouble, and that it took him a long time to paint, are evident from his diary. It is not, however, such a general favourite as most of his other early works. There is perhaps too large an expanse of foreground, and the figures appear too small for the size of the picture. Mr. Liston, the actor, sat for the man who is seated at the table holding up a bottle in his left hand. Hazlitt, in his "Criticisms on Art," says that "Liston's face in this flock of drunkards is a smiling failure," and Mr. Leslie considers "The Village Festival" the "most artificial of Wilkie's earlier productions, although," he adds, "the exquisite delicacy of touch which marks more or less every period of his art is here seen in the greatest perfection."

It was bought, by J. Angerstein, Esq., for 800 guineas, and is now in the South Kensington Museum.

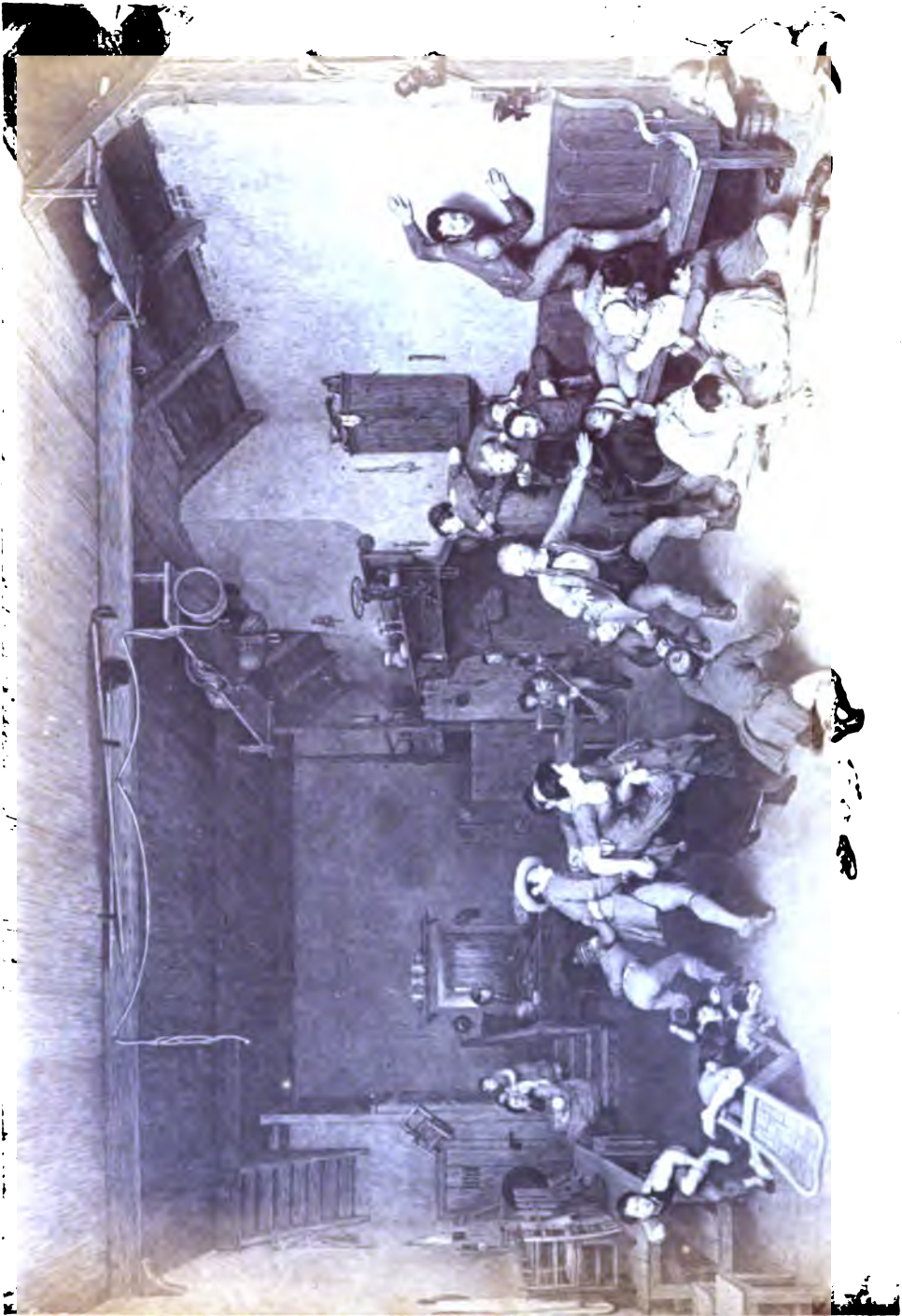


BLIND MAN'S BUFF.


BLIND Man's Buff" was painted for George IV, then Prince Regent. In a letter to his sister, Wilkie tells her that, much to his surprise, His Royal Highness came up and spoke to him about this picture. "He told me," he says, "that he was delighted with the picture I had painted for him, and wished me to paint, at my leisure, a companion picture of the same size. The Marquis of Stafford, who was with him, then said that I had promised to paint him a picture for several years, but had never done it, and he was afraid he should never get a picture from me: when his Royal Highness said, by way of apology, that his lordship should consider I had been long ill, and added that he would be very glad of another picture, after I had satisfied the Marquis of Stafford."

The picture afterwards painted for the Stafford Gallery was "The Breakfast Table;" the companion to the "Blind Man's Buff" was "The Penny Wedding."

The figure of the Blind Man in the picture, with his hands stretched out, is said to resemble in his action the figure of Elymas the sorcerer in the Cartoon. Wilkie received 500 guineas for this picture: it was exhibited in 1813.



THE PEDLAR.

ITH a proud, and, at the same time, a wily smile did the crafty pedlar display a collection of wares far superior to those which usually filled his packages, and in particular some stuffs and embroideries of such beauty, fringed, flowered, and worked upon foreign and arabesque patterns, that the sight might have dazzled a far more brilliant company than the simple race of Thule. All beheld and admired, while Mistress Baby Yellowby, holding up her hands, protested it was a sin even to look upon such extravagance, and worse than murder so much as to ask the price."

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"The Pirate" was not published at the time Wilkie painted this picture; but Wilkie doubtless had some Bryce Snailsfoot in his mind's eye when he depicted the "proud, but at the same time wily smile" of *his* "crafty Pedlar." When the bargain is concluded he will no doubt wish the fair purchaser "grace to wear the garment and to me to guide the siller, and protect us from earthly vanities and earthly covetousness."

Purchased by Dr. Baillie, Wilkie's kind physician, for 320 guineas.



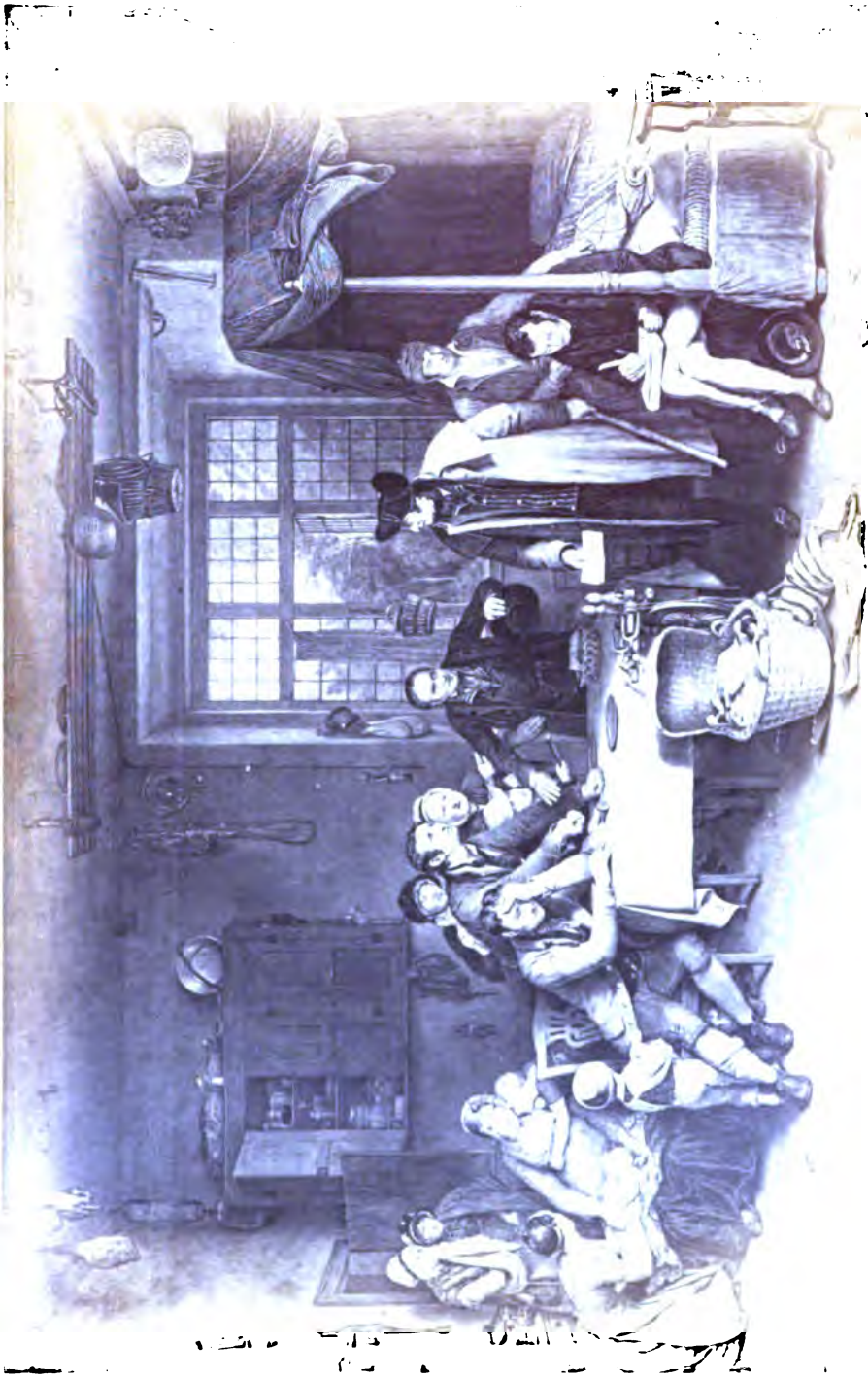
DISTRAINING FOR RENT.

DISTRAINING for Rent," says Leslie, "displays dramatic powers of the very highest order. Of a picture so well known by Raimbach's fine engraving I need say little, and indeed I know not how to say anything of its pathos that would not fall very far short of its impression. But I cannot help noticing the admirable manner in which Wilkie has introduced one of the subordinate figures, the man employed in writing an inventory of the furniture. The consciousness of being a thoroughly unwelcome visitor is shown in every circumstance connected with this figure. He seems desirous of occupying the smallest possible space. He has seated himself on the corner of the bedstead, deposited his hat between that and his feet. The sheriff's officer is equally good. . . . How true to nature is the dog too, that has taken refuge under his master's chair, and looks out from between his legs with great dissatisfaction towards the strangers whom he dares not attack. And then the two women-neighbours near the door; the one silent and affected by the scene, the other a gossip who has left her own affairs to see what is going on elsewhere. She has the key of her house in her hand."


LESLIE'S *Handbook for Young Painters*.

The "Distraining for Rent" is one of the noblest and truest of Wilkie's paintings. Its honest pathos is not acquired by any "sensational" incident, nor is it jarred by any vulgar realization. Its highest merit is that it is *simply true*. Wilkie was not, like Fuseli, "put out by nature," but ever tried to render one of her aspects with patient and wise humility.

"Distraining for Rent" was bought, by the British Institution, for 600 guineas. Leslie says that it was suffered to lie in a dark lumber-room for many years, being only occasionally brought into the light when the Exhibition rooms were empty. The directors of the Institution were fearful that they had made a mistake in their purchase. It was painted in 1814, and exhibited in the British Institution in 1815.




THE RABBIT ON THE WALL.

HE Rabbit on the Wall" is a charming little domestic scene, which Wilkie evidently enjoyed painting. It has all the excellency of minute detail of a Dutch interior, but it also has a strong human interest in it, which the Dutch and Flemish schools seldom express. The interest in many Flemish pictures is centred in the details alone, which Mr. Ruskin stigmatises as "the lowest and most contemptible style of art," but Wilkie is never guilty of this meanness. His heart and his intellect ever govern his dexterity, and although at this period of his life he would not paint even "a pewter basin" with haste, or carelessness, he never thrusts such a thing into notice for the sake of showing his own fine painting.

"The Rabbit on the Wall," or, "The Hare among the Kale," as it is sometimes called in Scotland, was exhibited in 1816, and bought, by Mr. John Turner, for 200 guineas.




SIR WALTER SCOTT AND HIS FAMILY.

 HIS picture," says Sir Walter, in the account he wrote of it to the publisher, " has something in it of a domestic character. The idea which our inimitable Wilkie adopted was to represent our family group in the garb of south-country peasants, supposed to be concerting a merry-making, for which some of the preparations are seen. The place is the terrace near Hayside, commanding an extensive view towards the Cildon Hills. 1. The sitting figure, in the dress of a miller, I believe, represents Sir Walter Scott, author of a few score of volumes, and proprietor of Abbotsford, in the county of Roxburghe. 2. In front, and presenting, we may suppose, a country wag, somewhat addicted to poaching, stands Sir Adam Ferguson, knight, Keeper of the Regalia of Scotland. 3. In the background is a very handsome old man, upwards of eighty-four years old at the time, painted in his own character of shepherd. He also belonged to the numerous clan of Scott. He used to claim credit for three things unusual among the Southland shepherds, first, that he had never been 'fou' in the course of his life; secondly, he never had struck a man in anger; thirdly, that, though entrusted by his master with the management of large sales of stock, he had never lost a penny for his master by a bad debt. He died soon afterwards at Abbotsford. 4, 5, 6. Of the three female figures, the elder is the late regretted mother of the family represented. 5. The young person most forward in the group is Miss Sophia Charlotte Scott, now Mrs. John Gibson Lockhart; and, 6, her younger sister, Miss Ann Scott. Both are represented as ewe-milkers, with their ley-lins, or milk-pails. 7. On the left hand of the shepherd, the young man holding a fowling-piece is the eldest son of Sir Walter, now Captain of the King's Hussars. 8. The boy is the youngest of the family, Charles Scott, now of Brazen Nose College, Oxford. The two dogs were distinguished favourites of the family; the large one was a stag-hound of the old Highland breed, called Maida, and one of the handsomest dogs that could be found; it was a present from the Chief of Glengary to Sir Walter, and was highly valued, both on account of his beauty, his fidelity, and the great rarity of the breed. The other is a little Highland terrier, called Cruishe (goblin), of a particular kind, bred in Kintail. It was a present from the Honourable Mrs. Stewart Mackenzie, and is a valuable specimen of a race which is now also scarce."



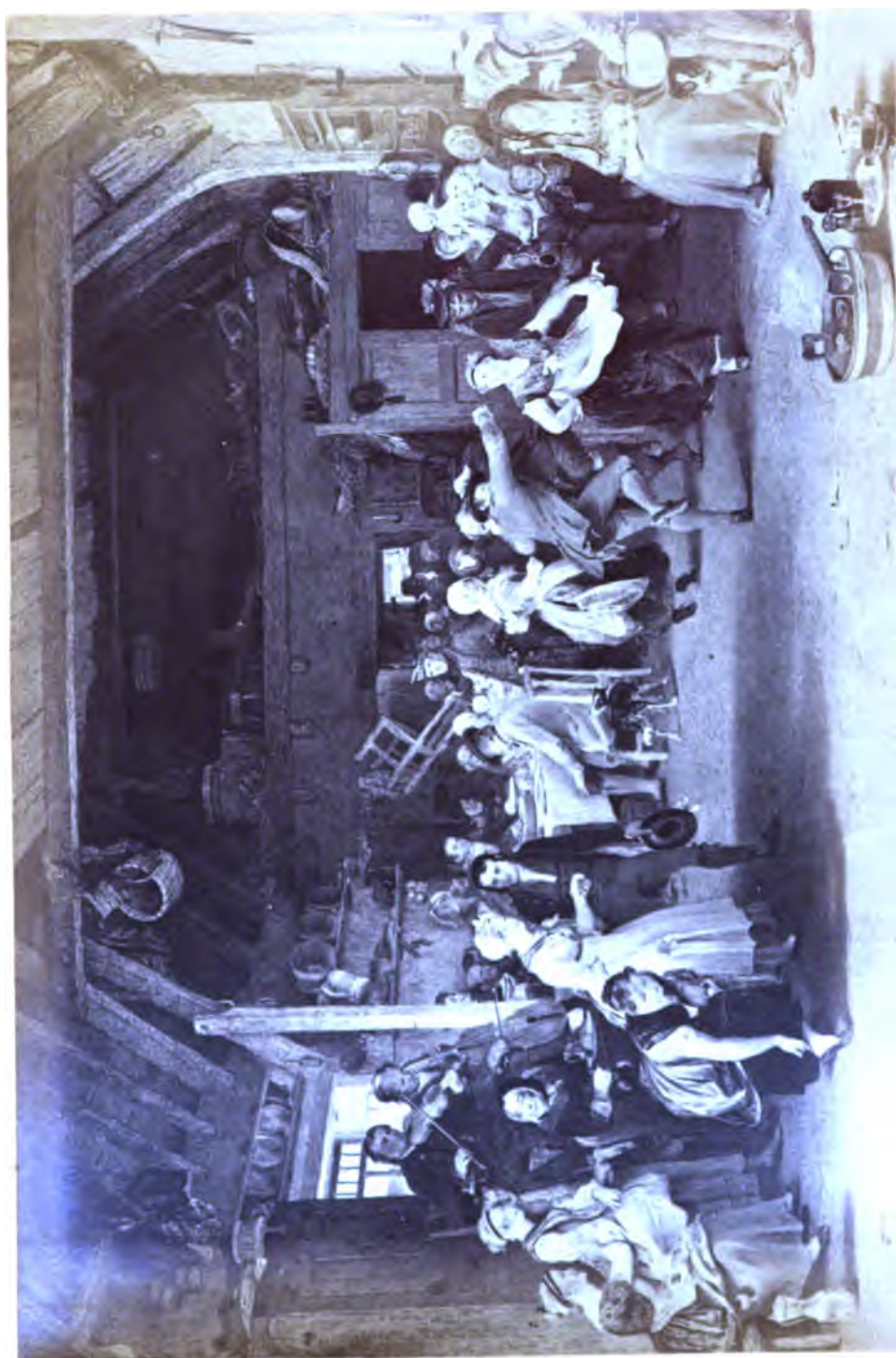


THE PENNY WEDDING.


HE Penny Wedding," first called "The Scotch Wedding," was painted for the Prince Regent in 1818. "All the glee and modest joy of the elder poets of Scotland" are in this picture, says Allan Cunningham, "with none of their indecorum," for which omission, he hints, the Prince "hardly forgave" Wilkie. Wilkie received 500 guineas for this picture, which was exhibited in 1819.

"The Penny Wedding' is equal to the 'Hallow E'en' of Burns, or to the inimitable description of rustic life in the 'twa dogs.' The joyousness and activity with which the reel is going on to the music of Neil Gow—the simple feasting in the background where the grace is not forgotten,—and the satisfaction with which the Howdie, an important personage on such occasions, and the village doctor regard the scene, are matchless, and in a manner as far above all common-place or vulgarity, as it is free from over-refinement. Wilkie in such subjects seemed as if he were guided by the precept of Polonius—'Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.'"

. *LESLIE'S Hand-book for Young Painters.*



READING THE WILL.


 HIS Picture gave rise to what has been called the "Contention of the Kings" for its possession. It was painted in fulfilment of a commission of the King of Bavaria, who wisely left "the subject, the size, and the price of the picture" he ordered entirely to the painter's discretion. Wilkie, after some consideration, chose the "Reading the Will," and worked at it, not in proportion to the money reward it was to bring, but with the earnest determination to do the best of which he was capable. George IV. was so pleased with this picture that he wished Wilkie to paint a duplicate for the King of Bavaria, and to let him have the original. This it was not possible that Wilkie could accede to, without the Bavarian Monarch's consent; and finally, after a long correspondence on the subject between the ministers of the two courts, George IV. gave up his claim, and the picture was sent to Munich.

Wilkie does not usually paint pretty women, but the young widow in this picture has a decidedly pretty face. The hard, selfish, worldly face of the old grandmother, who stands behind with the baby, is also very expressive, she looks just the woman to have sacrificed a young daughter to a rich old man. She is now full of self-satisfaction and triumph; but let her beware, her daughter is already listening to the soft speeches of a military officer, who looks as if he could very well spend all the old man's money, and then leave its inheritor penniless and broken-hearted.

Wilkie received £425 for this picture, the £25 being for its frame; but it was afterwards bought, at the sale of the King of Bavaria's pictures, for £1200, and placed in the Munich Gallery. It was exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1820.




CHELSEA PENSIONERS READING THE GAZETTE OF
THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

HE Battle of Waterloo itself made scarcely a greater stir in the land than did the "Reading the Gazette," when it appeared in the Academy Exhibition in 1822. Young and old, rich and poor, crowded to see it, soldiers hurried from drill, and pensioners hobbled on their crutches, whilst the heroes who are represented in it were often recognized and proclaimed with a shout of delight. It was, in fact, welcomed with a perfect storm of applause; and although the subject had doubtless much to do with this popularity, coming as it did whilst the excitement the great battle had caused was yet vivid in men's minds, still the real merits and marvellous composition of this picture left little room for carping critics to ply their trade.

"There is not in art," says Leslie, "a finer touch of expression than that of the anxious face of the woman overlooking the old Pensioner who reads to his companions the first news of the Battle of Waterloo. The contrast of this single face to all the others that surround the reader is indeed a master stroke." This picture was painted for the Duke of Wellington.



THE PARISH BEADLE.


 WE have here a picture of one of the most aggressive types of "man, proud man, dressed in a little brief authority." The beadle, in the full-blown dignity of bumbledom, is hauling off to prison some poor Savoyards who have dared to infringe the usually dormant vagrancy laws, by exhibiting a bear and a monkey in some town or village governed by this high official. This Picture, when exhibited in the Royal Academy, in 1823, had for its motto a quotation from Burn's "Justice of the Peace," "And an officer giveth sufficient notice what he is, when he saith to the party, 'I arrest you in the king's name,' and in such case, the party at their peril ought to obey him."

I do not know whether it has ever been noticed before, but there is a dog, sometimes two, in almost every one of Wilkie's earlier pictures. These animals are not put in merely for effect, or to fill up a blank space, they generally have some part to play in the scene. The dog in "The Letter of Introduction" asks "who are you?" as plainly and suspiciously as his master; in "The Blind Fiddler," the dog is listening to the music with quite as much interest as the rest of the company, and with even more discrimination in his looks. He evidently thinks himself quite qualified to judge between the relative merits of the "Braes o' Ballendean" and "Bonnie Lassie." In "Blind Man's Buff," he is enjoying the glee, participating in it rather to his cost, for one of the young urchins has just tumbled over him, and he is apparently getting somewhat flattened. In "The Reading of the Will" he has crouched beneath his dead master's chair, and is apparently the only one who mourns for him, and in the present picture he represents that wise, melancholy, and long-suffering class, who are trained to perform tricks for the amusement of their supposed superiors.

"The Parish Beadle" possesses an astonishing force of colour, a brilliant lighting, and a thoroughly careful and solid execution." — WAAGEN.




THE HIGHLAND FAMILY.

HE Highland Family" was painted for the Academy Exhibition of 1825, shortly after Wilkie's return from Scotland, and at a time when his health was already failing. It was doubtless a true sketch of some Highland interior such as Wilkie delighted to find, and with the inhabitants of which he usually contrived to strike up an intimacy when the cottage "looked promising" from an artistic point of view. In one such cottage, Wilkie tells his sister in one of his letters, he made a sketch of a weaver's daughter, who with great difficulty was persuaded to take off an English cap that she had put on to captivate the English gentleman, but which entirely destroyed her merit in the painter's sight; she complained, when asked to do so, "that her hair was so *touzie*."

Every detail of this characteristic little picture is most carefully painted. The mother, who is holding her baby for her husband to kiss, has great beauty and grace, although of the poorest class. The Highlander himself looks rather too smooth, and of a conventional type; but the little damsel at the door might have been the original *touzie*-haired lassie, she is so thoroughly natural.



THE MAID OF SARAGOSSA.


 HIS was one of the pictures which Wilkie painted whilst he was in Spain. It attracted much notice in Madrid, and was exhibited in London, in 1829, where it was admired more than any of his other Spanish subjects.

The Spanish Joan of Arc is represented, Wilkie tells us, " on the battery in front of the convent of Santa Engratia, where her lover being slain, she stepped over his body, took his place at the gun, and declared she would avenge his death. The principal person engaged in placing the gun is Don Joseph Palafox, who commanded the garrison during this memorable siege ; in front of him is Father Consolacion, an Augustine friar, who served with great ability as an engineer, and who, with a crucifix in his hand, is directing at what object it should be pointed. Nigh him is seen Boggiero, a priest famed for his heroic defence, and for his cruel fate when he fell into the hands of the enemy."

George IV. bought this picture for 800 guineas.




JOHN KNOX PREACHING BEFORE THE LORDS
OF THE CONGREGATION.

 HIS Picture, for which Wilkie had collected materials before he went abroad, was not completed until 1832. It was the first great national subject which Wilkie painted entirely in the style of the "Grand School," which Mr. Ruskin says ruined him. However that may be, this picture is one that interests most people, and Dr. Waagen considers that, "for size and richness of composition, it is one of Wilkie's greatest works."

The group of four immediately in the fore-ground of the picture are the noble and good Earl of Murray, the wily Morton, the Earl of Argyle, and Cunningham Earl of Glencairn. The foremost lady of the group is the Countess of Argyle, Mary Stuart's illegitimate sister, and not Mary herself, as is sometimes asserted. The Catholic Lords at the back of the ladies are Beaton, Bishop of Glasgow, Archbishop Hamilton, and Kennedy, Abbot of Crossraguel. George Buchanan, scholar and gentleman, is also represented in the gallery.



THE SPANISH MOTHER AND CHILD.


HE Spanish Mother and Child" was exhibited in 1834. It was painted for Sir W. Knighton, who chose this subject, and commissioned Wilkie to paint it; but for some reason this fact was kept secret at the time of the Exhibition, and much curiosity was evinced to know to whom it belonged.

Wilkie writes about the sensation it created to his friend Sir William Knighton, "The King and Queen came yesterday, (i. e. to the Academy). The Queen appeared kind, thought the Duke extremely like, talked of her own picture, which I find rather a favourite, and spoke with much satisfaction of the Spanish Lady. The King called me to him when he came before it, and spoke quite loud out as approving of the expression of the Child. When the company came afterwards, I found all, particularly ladies, approving of this picture; and a nobleman of high rank sent to know if it was bespoke; to which I answered that a kind friend to whom it belonged had, I might venture to say, that attachment to it which arises from its being a subject of his own choice before it was painted."

A Portrait of the Duke of Wellington, as Constable of the Tower, with his Charger; a Portrait of Queen Adelaide, a Portrait of Sir John Leslie, and a Portrait of a Lady, were also exhibited in 1834, as well as a humorous little picture called "Not at Home."




THE FIRST EAR-RING.

HE First Ear-ring" was exhibited in 1835, the same year as the "Columbus and the Prior." It manifests a decided Spanish leaning in its treatment. The details are elaborate, but not minute. The action of the little dog is comic. He is putting up his paw to his ear, as if he were undergoing a similiar operation to the little girl.

This picture was bought by the Duke of Bedford for 260 guineas.




COLUMBUS AT THE CONVENT OF LA RIBIDA.

HE subject of this Picture was taken from a passage in Washington Irving's "Life of Columbus." A stranger, who was "travelling on foot, accompanied by a boy, stopped one day at the gate of a convent of Franciscan Friars, and asked for bread and water for his child. Friar Juan Perez de Marchena, happening to pass, was struck with the appearance of the stranger, and observing, from his air and accent, that he was a foreigner, entered into conversation with him, and soon learnt the particulars of his story:—that stranger was Columbus." The Friar was greatly interested by the conversation of Columbus, and detained him for a time as a guest in his convent. The conference which followed forms the subject of the picture. Columbus is seated at the convent table, with the Prior on his right, to whom he is explaining the chart of his proposed voyage, the physician Garcia Fernandez, who had been summoned by the Prior on account of his scientific knowledge to listen to Columbus' plans, leans over the table, whilst behind him stands Martin Alonzo Pinzon, a renowned sea-captain, who accompanied Columbus on his voyage. Diego, the young son of Columbus, stands by his side.



THE VILLAGE SCHOOL.

HE Village School," a composition of thirty-six figures, was sold at the Wilkie sale for £756. The varied character and humour displayed in the young urchins' faces is admirably represented. No doubt the scene was a reminiscence of Wilkie's own school-days, when he used to draw heads on his slate instead of adding sums. Perhaps the thoughtful but ragged young boy to the extreme left is doing something of the same sort, for he seems to be contemplating his slate with more absorbed interest than a line of figures could give to it.

What keen interest is being felt in that game at Cat's-cradle, what tremulous excitement in the little fellow who is about to take it off the girl's hands, and superior critical judgment in the boy who is watching his proceedings and probably confusing him with advice on the subject! That sturdy young rascal who is bawling his lesson so loudly has not the slightest idea what it means, whilst the gentle and refined young student who stands next him is so abstracted that he does not heed the clamour. Look at the boy making hideous faces at the young child on her sister's knee, and the careful manner in which the boy at the writing-table is cutting his pen into an utterly useless stamp. The schoolmaster has a very intelligent face, but, like the Pitlessie schoolmaster of Wilkie's youth, is somewhat too gentle to hold such unruly scholars in proper awe. The little child at his knee is evidently a pet. Altogether the scene has a wonderful truthfulness which awakes the greatest interest.





1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses, which appears to be a directory or a list of contacts. The names are written in a cursive script, and the addresses are listed below them. The list is organized into columns, with names in the first column and addresses in the second column.

2. The second part of the document is a list of names and addresses, which appears to be a directory or a list of contacts. The names are written in a cursive script, and the addresses are listed below them. The list is organized into columns, with names in the first column and addresses in the second column.

3. The third part of the document is a list of names and addresses, which appears to be a directory or a list of contacts. The names are written in a cursive script, and the addresses are listed below them. The list is organized into columns, with names in the first column and addresses in the second column.

4. The fourth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, which appears to be a directory or a list of contacts. The names are written in a cursive script, and the addresses are listed below them. The list is organized into columns, with names in the first column and addresses in the second column.

5. The fifth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, which appears to be a directory or a list of contacts. The names are written in a cursive script, and the addresses are listed below them. The list is organized into columns, with names in the first column and addresses in the second column.

6. The sixth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, which appears to be a directory or a list of contacts. The names are written in a cursive script, and the addresses are listed below them. The list is organized into columns, with names in the first column and addresses in the second column.

7. The seventh part of the document is a list of names and addresses, which appears to be a directory or a list of contacts. The names are written in a cursive script, and the addresses are listed below them. The list is organized into columns, with names in the first column and addresses in the second column.

8. The eighth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, which appears to be a directory or a list of contacts. The names are written in a cursive script, and the addresses are listed below them. The list is organized into columns, with names in the first column and addresses in the second column.

9. The ninth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, which appears to be a directory or a list of contacts. The names are written in a cursive script, and the addresses are listed below them. The list is organized into columns, with names in the first column and addresses in the second column.

10. The tenth part of the document is a list of names and addresses, which appears to be a directory or a list of contacts. The names are written in a cursive script, and the addresses are listed below them. The list is organized into columns, with names in the first column and addresses in the second column.

